

JAQUELINA

OF

HAINAULT:

AN HISTORICAL NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES,

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "THE DUKE OF CLARENCE."

VOL. III.

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M.DCC.XCVIII.

JACQUELINE

MAINBULT



IN THE

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THE VOLUME OF THE FIRST OF CHANCE

VOL. III.

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M. DCCC. XXXIII.

JAQUELINA

OF

HAINAULT.

CHAP. I.

AT a ball which Catharine had given in honour of the marriage of one of the princesses, Jaquelina, who had for reasons of delicacy declined partaking of all public amusements, at the earnest entreaty of the queen now graced the assembly with her presence. A crowd of young nobility had surrounded her, each emulous of the honour of her hand : but however the princess excelled in this graceful exercise, not feeling inclined to engage in it, she had refused every invitation of the kind, when the

duke of Bedford, now turning towards her, said with a smile, "I see it would be a vain attempt to persuade your highness to change this cruel resolution which you have formed, after having witnessed the dismissal of so many unfortunates, or else you would view me among your besiegers!"—"You are determined then, my lord, I see," cried the princess, "not to put your dignity to any risk."—"How barbarous, when thus certain of a refusal!"—"What, condemn me without having made any trial? Your grace has laid aside your justice."—At this moment the queen came up—"The princess is inexorable, madam!" cried the duke: "a little army has been thrown into despair by the resolution she has taken not to dance. As for me, hopeless of success, I had the prudence not to make an attempt where only mortification was to be expected."—"How greatly I admire the wisdom with which your grace has conducted yourself in this most important affair!" re-

turned Jaquelina smiling—"Justly does the duke of Bedford think the cause merits not the trouble of an attempt!"—"What an insulting tyrant!" cried the duke. Then lifting up his eyes with an affected concern, "O unhappy people," continued he, "who are doomed to be governed by such a mistress, how pitiable is your lot!"—"I have the greatest mind in the world," said the princess laughing, "to punish this impertinent apostrophe by changing my resolution!"—"Do so, my dear Jaquelina," interposed Catharine, "and you will oblige both the king and myself." But Jaquelina, who had merely said this out of pleasantry, besought the queen not to urge her on a point which, for many reasons, she deemed improper to comply with; and Bedford, who inwardly approved her resolution, resolving not to pain her by farther entreaties, made some ludicrous speech expressive of despair; and, bowing, resigned his place to the bishop of Winchester.

“What, madam,” said the bishop seating himself beside the princess, “is my nephew also among the discarded?”—“O no, my lord: the duke of Bedford is too politic a prince to lay siege where there is no probability of success!”—“And are you always thus cruel, lovely Jaqueline?” cried the prelate gazing upon her with an air of rather too much tenderness for a man of his age and circumstances.—“My lord?” returned the princess not comprehending his meaning.—“I would inquire, madam,” said his lordship, immediately checking his ardour, “if in Hainault custom allows not its princes to indulge in those innocent diversions which in our country are permitted them?”—“O yes, my lord,” returned Jaqueline, “dancing is one of our chief amusements: your nephew, the duke of Gloucester, has often witnessed our partaking of that diversion during the time he honoured our court with his residence.”—“I am informed, madam,” said the bishop, fixing

fixing his penetrating eye attentively on the princess, “that Hainault proved but too fatal to the peace of Gloucester: I would be informed of this affair.”

The confusion Jaquelina betrayed at this question did not escape the observation of Winchester—“It is impossible, my lord, for me—for me—” cried the princess hesitating, “to satisfy you on this subject. I should suppose—I should think that the duke had too much good sense to——” Here she stopped, unable to proceed.—“Ah, madam!” exclaimed his lordship with vivacity, “a man under the dominion of love loses at once his reason, and acts only as circumstances direct.”—“Ah, surely, my lord, you do not suspect,” cried the princess, “that I, that——”

At this moment, most fortunately for Jaquelina, the queen, who had been deeply engaged in conversation with the king, now turning towards the bishop, engaged his attention.—“I want your assistance, my lord

of Winchester," said she, "in order to persuade the princess to oblige the king and myself, by taking a part in what she confessedly stands unrivalled in." His lordship bowed; then assuming a tragic air as he addressed the princess, "O lovely, yet cruel Jaquelina!" cried he, "were it not that fate had destined me a habit whose restrictions—restrictions which never till now I complained of—excluded me from the honour of pretending to that fair hand, foremost among your petitioners would you have beheld him who now addresses you."—"Your lordship then," replied Jaquelina laughing, "has no reason to complain of a restriction which has saved you the mortification of a refusal!"—"Ah, justly do you punish that presumption, which made me for one moment imagine, to me your highness would have shewn a preference!"—"Come, my lord," interrupted the lovely Catharine, "a truce with all this gallantry, which avails not my cause, and
join

join me in pleading for your nephew, as you cannot for yourself!"—"What, my nephew of Gloucester, madam!" returned his lordship with quickness—"No, no, my lord—his grace of Bedford!"

The bishop now, with the queen, so forcibly attacked the princess, that at length she was compelled to grant a reluctant consent that she would, during the course of the evening, with the duke of Bedford for her partner, engage in the dance.

The dowager duchess of St. Albans, who with the whole of her family had attended the ball, had beheld this contest with scarcely suppressed anger.—"I vow," cried she, turning towards her youngest daughter, whom she had, in the expectation of seeing her engaged to a young noble whose high rank and splendid fortunes had made her think of him as a son-in-law, forbidden to dance—"I vow," cried the duchess, "there is more fuss and as much attention paid this runaway princess as if attended by all

the pomp of royalty she could have expected!"

How little did the duchess imagine, that what she had intended as a censure was the highest encomium she could have passed on her country!

"It is very true, madam," replied the young lady with tearful eye; "for my part, I think the gentlemen are infatuated."—"She should be burnt for a witch," cried the duchess in a rage.—"Ah, madam," cried a fine youth who was seated next her, "she is so handsome that I am sure no man would fire the stake that was to destroy her."—"I protest, Edward," exclaimed her grace highly incensed, "you are hourly tormenting me with your impertinence. Be silent, sir, or quit the room."

At this moment the very young noble whom the duchess intended to honour with her daughter's hand came up. Immediately the gentle heart of lady Mabel began to palpitate, whilst the duchess, drawing
up

up her neck at least a yard high, put on one of her most gracious smiles. “What, your ladyship declines dancing to night!” cried the young lord addressing himself to the former.—“The lady Mabel Seymour, my lord,” cried the duchess with a look of infinite importance, “is very choice to whom she gives her hand, though but for a dance.”—“Her ladyship is right—certainly right, madam,” returned his lordship, with difficulty restraining a smile—“few in this assembly can have the presumption to pretend to such an honour.”

The young lady, now affecting a becoming modesty, hid her face behind her fan; whilst the duchess, with a ridiculous gesture, exclaimed, “Dear, my lord! I am sure there are *some*,” and she laid a peculiar emphasis upon the word, “with whom it would give me great pleasure to see her dance”—“What honour you do them, madam!” replied the young lord, modestly declining to make a pro-

per application of the compliment, "and how unfortunate that they should be ignorant of a felicity within their attainment!" Then making a low obeisance to her grace, and slightly bowing to the mortified lady Mabel, he was walking away, when a nobleman of an elderly appearance joining him, stopped his retreat.—"So! Fitz-Arthur," cried the latter in a tone of raillery, "you were among the unsuccessful to-night! What, you find it impossible to make any impression on that beautiful piece of marble?"—"Oh, I entreat your lordship, mention not a subject so mortifying to my vanity! Would to heaven that the duke her husband had better secured her prison-doors, than to have suffered her to make an escape which will prove fatal to so many!" "What a barbarous wretch!" exclaimed the lady Mabel, concealing, under an appearance of compassion, the vexation she endured at hearing this nobleman had solicited the princess's hand—"I am sure I
feel

feel most sincerely for her misfortunes, and discredit half the ill-natured stories that the world tell of her.”—“Discredit every thing, my dear lady Mabel,” cried the elder nobleman, “against the young and lovely of your sex, which bears the appearance of having ill-nature for its author; and be assured you will render yourself, if possible, more amiable in our eyes!”—“I am sure, my lord,” cried the young lady in a tone of vexation, “I am far from being one of the princess’s accusers, and hope, from my heart, that the king will not be so cruel as to deliver her up, which they say he intends, to the duke of Burgundy.”—“Impossible!” cried the two lords with warmth, “impossible that Henry can have an intention so base, so unworthy of his majesty!”

“I would venture any wager,” exclaimed the youth whose unfortunate encomium on the princess had drawn upon him the displeasure of the duchess—“that all this time your lordships have been talking of
 B 6 the

the beautiful princess of Hainault!"—
 "You are right, lord Edward," returned
 the elder lord—"Come, what say you?"
 —"Me, my lord? Ah that I were a man!"
 —"Well, what then?"—"Why I would,
 whilst breath was given me, protect the
 princess!"—"Noble youth!" cried the
 nobleman grasping his hand, "how I ad-
 mire thy spirit! And believe me, that the
 fair subject whose cause you would espouse,
 is worthy of so brave a champion!"

"I suppose your lordships are not igno-
 rant," interposed the duchess swelling with
 indignation, "that the king is now in
 treaty with the Pope for the purpose of de-
 livering up a person who is only a burden
 upon the nation, and who cannot without
 an act of injustice be detained from her
 husband?"

"I believe your grace is misinformed as
 to this affair," said the senior lord addressing
 the duchess, "as I understand, from un-
 doubted authority, that his majesty is en-
 deavouring

deavouring to procure from his holiness a divorce."—"A divorce, my lord!" exclaimed the lady Mabel in a faint tone of voice—"A divorce!" cried her grace with angry astonishment—"A divorce!" repeated a young lady, rising with evident disorder from her seat, and abruptly quitting the room—"Poor lady Eleanor!" cried the younger nobleman, looking after the lady with an air of pity, "now your torments have commenced."

The duke of Gloucester, engaged in conversation with the king, had, with sensations not of the most pleasing kind, beheld the princess surrounded by a crowd of admirers, who were paying her that homage which he felt much more disposed to pay her than to attend to his sovereign, whose discourse he could not but fancy was this night extremely tedious. His eyes were continually directed towards Jaqueline; and the smiles which she bestowed on Bedford distracted his very soul. At length the
king,

king, growing weary of his inattentive auditor, arose ; and Gloucester, instantly availing himself of his freedom, approached the princess, who was still engaged in conversation with the bishop of Winchester. Immediately he inquired if she meant to dance ? She was uncertain, she said. Ah, then, should she so honour the occasion, how happy should he esteem himself would she accept him as a partner !—That, she said, was impossible, as she was already engaged.—Politeness forbade further inquiries, and the duke, mortified in the extreme, walked away.

Jaquelina dance, and not with him ! was a sufficient subject of vexation for the evening ; and only an impulse of curiosity could have detained him in a place which now afforded him so little pleasure.

“ My lord of Winchester,” cried a young courtier familiarly coming up to the duke, yet directing his eyes towards the spot where Jaquelina was seated, “ is, I think, become
one

one of the princess's most constant admirers, and no doubt regrets that his mitre will preclude his standing forth a candidate when the Pope shall have granted a divorce."

"And who, Sir, authorises you to speak thus freely of the uncle of your sovereign?" returned Gloucester, incensed above measure at hearing the princess made the subject of a light discourse.—Never was greater surprise and consternation exhibited than what appeared on the countenance of the noble; for, presuming on the little friendship that had ever subsisted betwixt the prince and his uncle, he had ventured, without the least idea of giving offence, to speak thus freely. Confounded and abashed, he was preparing some confused apology, when Gloucester, without deigning him the least attention, turned away. But scarcely had he quitted the mortified youth, ere he grew ashamed of the warmth with which he had resented so slight an offence. He
longed

longed to return and apologize for his behaviour; but the subject of his short-lived anger, overwhelmed with confusion, had quitted the room. Vexed and angry with himself, the duke now joined his brother Bedford, who had just quitted the lady with whom he had been dancing—"The princess of Hainault means to join the dancers to-night, I find, my lord!" cried the duke, endeavouring to affect a free and disengaged air.

Had Bedford observed the countenance of his brother, he would have seen every feature expressive of the deepest anxiety; but either inattentive, or not choosing to notice it, he replied rather gravely, that he fancied his grace must be mistaken, as the DUCHESS of BRABANT had assured him herself, that she should not engage in the diversion.

With a greater degree of cordiality than Gloucester had for some time felt for his brother, he put his arm through Bedford's,

ford's, and entered into conversation with him; when a gentleman now coming up from the queen called the duke away, and not many minutes after he saw him lead out Jaquelina to the dance.

Had death in a thousand shapes presented itself before his eyes, he could not have been more startled than at this sight. Motionless with surprise, and yet doubtful of what he saw, he had remained for some time fixed to the spot, whilst every sense was wrapt in silent wonder, when his attention was called by a loud burst of applause, which now broke from every quarter of the assembly. His recollection thus restored, he gazed with an agony scarcely to be described, whilst the happy Bedford was conducting through the mazes of a country-dance his beauteous partner. Never had he appeared to such advantage in the eyes of Gloucester; yet, to his disordered fancy, an insulting triumph sparkled in his eyes as he occasionally passed him.

Had

Had his eyes then contained the power ascribed to basilisks, Bedford would have been extended breathless at his feet. Scarcely could he refrain from publicly upbraiding him with his dissimulation; and the confusion it would have created, alone restrained his indignation from bursting forth.

The bishop of Winchester had remarked, with secret pleasure, the distracted air and disordered looks of Gloucester whilst gazing at the elegant pair; and, willing to increase his torment, he joined him as thus he continued fixed as it were by enchantment to a spot which at once afforded him subject for his admiration and regret.—“What a charming couple!” he exclaimed, seized with a sudden fit of admiration—“What a noble figure is the duke! And the princess—with what grace she moves! Observe the animation which sparkles in their eyes! Ah, they seem born for each other.—But your highness seems unwell: has any thing disordered you?”—“Nothing, my lord, nothing:

nothing : I entreat you do not question me," returned Gloucester, evidently disturbed.

The bishop's concern satisfied by this assurance, he proceeded :—"Hear you the report," continued he, "that the king is in treaty with the Pope for a divorce for the princess ? Should he succeed, it is not improbable but that his majesty may bestow her on Bedford."—"I should not imagine, my lord," cried Gloucester, whilst his eyes flashed fire, "that the princess of Hainault would permit herself to be thus disposed of at pleasure."—"But her obligations to the king, and that high sense of gratitude so apparent in her disposition, may induce her to submit to his wishes." Then turning suddenly towards the duke, "Would you believe, my lord," he continued, "that I once gave credit to a foolish report which prevailed, that during your stay at Hainault a mutual attachment had been formed betwixt you and the princess ? Nay, nay, my lord, do not trouble yourself to deny it :
I want

I want no other evidence than the present to convince me of the fallacy of the tale! Yes, yes, it is easy enough to perceive who possesses the affections of the princess of Hainault."

Every word was like a dagger to the heart of Gloucester; and the bishop, observing this, went on:

"It is for this reason, no doubt," proceeded he, "that Bedford is employed by the king to negotiate the affair with Burgundy, who, you may imagine, will make a powerful resistance."—"Bedford, my lord! Is Bedford then employed in this affair?" demanded the duke with increased disorder. The prelate affirmed this to be true, and even exceeded a little the bounds of truth, in order to save his nephew from the torments of doubt. There wanted but this circumstance to complete the misery of Gloucester; and unable longer to command his feelings, without apologizing to his uncle he abruptly quitted the room.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

SCARCELY had Bedford awoke the next morning before he was surprised by a visit from Gloucester, whose countenance at once proclaimed that no fraternal regards had thus early called him from his bed. Well acquainted with the warmth of his brother's temper, Bedford determined, if possible, whatever provocation might be given, not to lose the command of his, and prepared himself with calmness to encounter the angry storm which he saw ready to burst forth.

"Were you, my lord, a stranger to the excess of my passion for the princess of Hainault," cried Gloucester, unable from passion to preface his discourse—"were you unacquainted with my sufferings, the risks I have run, though but for one moment to behold her, and the yet greater
torments

torments I have endured, when, at your entreaties, I have resisted so dangerous a pleasure, I could pardon, I could excuse the dissimulation of your last night's conduct, and the treachery which you have meditated against me."—"Your grace is warm," returned Bedford calmly; "afford me an explanation of epithets so unworthy of the character of a man of honour."—"This affected ignorance, my lord, is unworthy the man who aspires to the hand of Jaqueline! Boldly avow your passion; confess that with the king you have concerted a plan for her deliverance; acknowledge your intentions to supplant the credulous Gloucester, who confided in your treacherous bosom the dearest secret of his heart; and I will wave my prior claim, and trust to this well-tried sword to give me justice!"—"Rash, imprudent man, how little merits this unbecoming heat a brother, who, from infancy, has held you in his love! What grounds have you for your unjust suspicions?"

suspicions? When dared I to violate the respect I owe the princess by a conduct so unworthy of her? Her situation would ever be, with *me*, her protection. *You* offer to lay aside your claims, and, barbarous! to point your sword against a brother! What claims can you pretend to make? What has been your love but a source of grief, of dishonour, to the duchess? Regardless of her situation, you dared to conceive a criminal passion! You saw her susceptible heart fall a sacrifice to her gratitude! whilst, unconscious of the nature of those sentiments she had conceived for you, you exposed her, by your stay, to a discovery which would have overwhelmed her with endless shame. You beheld her make the glorious sacrifice of herself to preserve her country; and you exposed her, by your imprudence, to all the cruelties of that gloomy tyrant to whom she had become the victim! These, then, are your pretensions! These are the claims you pretend to make!"

"Hold,

“Hold, my lord,” cried Gloucester, who had with difficulty forborne interruption—“it is to the princess’s affections I lay claim, however unworthy I confess myself of them: these were involuntarily given, were mine, till a perfidious brother, by his insidious arts, stole them from me. Ah, changed into cold indifference is that sweet endearing confidence with which she once regarded the happy Gloucester; and those eyes which were wont to beam with the tenderest expression as I approached, now are turned away in scorn.”—“If the princess, my lord, is sensible of what she owes herself,” replied the duke coolly, “blame not me for a conduct which, were you to view it in its proper light, you could not but approve. For me, had I been so unfortunate as to have conceived other sentiments than those of friendship, I have already declared my respect for her situation would have forbidden my profaning her ears by an avowal of it.”—“But you deny
not

not then, my lord, that to procure her deliverance from Brabant was the subject of your late private conferences with the king; and, death to my hopes, Jaquelina was to become yours should the Pope grant a divorce?"—"Were I forever to forfeit your friendship, Gloucester," replied Bedford firmly, "and were I this moment to see the ready arm of a once much-loved brother pointing his murderous weapon at this doubly unprepared breast, I would refuse to betray that confidence my sovereign reposes in me. But let this assurance satisfy your doubting mind: were the princess now at liberty, sooner would I perish than accept a hand which might involve my country in trouble."—Gloucester sighed: "And you never, then, have sought to lessen me in the eyes of the princess?"—"Never!"—"One thing more I would ask of Bedford; but, alas! my courage fails"—"What! can the man who, unprovoked, has heaped such insults, such accumulated injuries,

injuries, on an unoffending brother, whose cruel arm was raised against his life, now want courage?"—"Alas! I dare not hazard a refusal."—"Nay, hesitate not: speak your wish. Well you know my yielding temper. Is it my life you thirst for?—Take it: no longer is it precious to me, now that it is become hateful to Gloucester."—"O God! this is too much—How now can I ever hope to obtain the forgiveness I would have asked?"—"Is Gloucester then sensible that he has wronged his friend? Is it forgiveness he requires of Bedford?"—"Ah! I feel I merit it not. Too greatly have I injured thee to hope for pardon!—And must I live a stranger to the best of brothers? Wilt thou tear from thy breast all memory of Gloucester?"—"No; here in this heart will I hold my much-loved penitent!"—"And canst thou, indeed, forgive the wrongs I have done thee, Bedford?"—"See you not these arms extended to receive thee?"—Oh my brother!"

ther," cried the duke as he flung himself on the neck of Bedford, "where fled humanity when I could suspect thee?"

The duke of Bedford now thought it necessary, notwithstanding Gloucester forbore all further questions, to explain the circumstance which the preceding night had given such cause for suspecting him of dissimulation, by declaring it was at the instance of the queen that the princess had been induced to accept him as a partner.

Freed from persecution, surrounded by friends studious to banish from her memory past sorrows, the princess by degrees seemed to lose the remembrance that she had ever been unhappy. Perhaps among her present enjoyments, and what not a little contributed towards her happiness, was the presence of Gloucester, though this was a circumstance which she strove to hide from herself. The winning softness of Bedford's manners, and the exalted character he bore,

made her desirous of cultivating his friendship and esteem. With him she felt she could repose the most unbounded confidence; and the generous sympathy with which he would listen to her tales of sorrow, would often rob them of their bitterness. Equally flattered by her confidence, as charmed with the numberless traits of a superior mind, which was so discoverable in Jaquelina, Bedford with transport accepted the offer of her friendship, and sought alike by his counsels and exertions in her service to render himself worthy of the trust she reposed in him. Yet, firm to what he held his duty, he resolved, notwithstanding the exalted opinion he had formed of the princess, to oppose her union with his brother: nor was he without the hope, from the exalted opinion he had formed of her character, should circumstances ever authorise his introducing the subject, of prevailing on her to determine against ever entering into an engagement that

that might prove fatal to a country which had afforded her its protection.

The vivacity which had appeared on the countenance of Gloucester on the princess's first arrival, now entirely had fled; and an air of the deepest dejection had supplied its place, on remarking the alteration of her conduct towards him. A thousand times in his heart he accused her of that inconstancy for which her sex stands so unjustly condemned; yet when, affected by his altered appearance, her eyes involuntarily fixed upon him with all their wonted sweetness, but in blushing haste withdrew when she perceived that she had attracted observation, he would impute it to resentment for those sufferings which he had caused her. But did this accord with the angelic sweetness of Jaquelina's disposition? No; it was blasphemy to suppose a mind like hers was resentful and unforgiving!

Bedford beheld with pity and surprise the despair to which his brother had deli-

vered himself; as to him the apparent coldness of the princess was evidently assumed. A thousand little circumstances betrayed her partiality for Gloucester; the reluctance with which she pronounced his name—the blushes which coloured her cheek when from necessity compelled thereto—the trembling, the agitation that was visible as he approached—all proclaimed that he was still beloved by her with the tenderest passion, and he trembled for the consequences.

The deep dejection which marked the air of Gloucester sensibly affected the heart of the princess: her resolution would often be ready to abandon her; and, to avoid the softnesses which would often gather around her heart on observing his distress, she had no resource but in flight.

One day, however, from accident, they found themselves alone—a situation long as sedulously shunned by Jaquelina, and as anxiously sought for by the duke, equally,
though

though from different causes, affected them. An awkward silence for some moments had reigned, when the princess, distressed beyond measure, arose to quit the room.—“In what can I have so offended you, madam,” exclaimed Gloucester, gently detaining her, “that for a few short moments you would deny me the happiness of speaking to you alone? Is then the promise you once made me of your friendship quite forgotten? To what cause must I assign the frigid coldness you assume towards the man who would rather die than offend you?—a coldness that drives me to despair!”

The princess, totally unprepared for this attack, knew not what to reply. It was impossible for her, without a breach of delicacy, to acknowledge the real motives which actuated her conduct; and she was forced to attribute her reserve to a circumstance which she had long ceased to remember with the smallest resentment.

“Surely, my lord,” cried she, for the
C 4 first

first time in her life having recourse to dissimulation—"surely, after the sufferings your imprudence has cost me, you cannot wonder that I behold you with diminished friendship!"

"And does Jaquelina harbour resentment? Can that bosom, which I supposed the habitation alone of peace and harmony, deny forgiveness of a fault for which my heart yet bleeds? Ah! did my behaviour on that fatal night exceed the bounds of that respect I owed you? Was it not chance alone discovered the unfortunate Gloucester? Was it not chance alone that led me to the fatal spot where—could I see Jaquelina sinking to the ground, and not fly to her aid?"—"Well, well, my lord," cried the princess hastily, "let us quit this painful subject. I will endeavour to banish it, if possible, from my remembrance!"

"Ah! may I then hope that Jaquelina will regard me with her wonted confidence; that she will view me still as her friend,

as—

as—— Ah! whither would my presumption carry me?—Forgive me, madam!— At present, I ask no more.”——“As a friend,” returned Jaquelina deeply blushing, “I would wish ever to regard the duke of Gloucester.”

Some company coming in relieved the princess from a situation that now began to grow particularly embarrassing, and afforded her an opportunity of withdrawing.

Henry, earnest in his endeavours to free the princess from the tyranny of Brabant, now made a public application to the court of Rome for the cancelling her marriage with that prince; but however zealous he shewed himself in her interests, the faction which at this time reigned in Italy, in consequence of the indecision of the conclave respecting the election of the pope, prevented his meeting with success.

This was a mortifying stroke to Gloucester, and an afflicting one to Jaquelina,

who, sanguine in her expectations of soon being effectually freed from the power of Brabant, had given way to all those delightful sensations which the prospect of a speedy deliverance from a painful bondage could inspire.

The duke of Bedford, however, employed in negotiating this affair, and secure of the concurrence of Benedict, the opponent of Calonne (who, on his election, assumed the name of Martin the Fifth), should the popedom be given him, had little doubt of a divorce being obtained, and only dreaded that Gloucester would avail himself of a circumstance so favourable to his passion, and espouse the princess. The prospect of a union which would necessarily involve England in endless disputes, beside giving umbrage to so powerful an ally as the duke of Burgundy, gave Bedford serious uneasiness, and he frequently spoke to his brother on the subject; but though Gloucester

cester on all other affairs was open and unreserved, yet on this he preserved an inflexible silence.

On the duke's remonstrating one day with peculiar warmth on his reserve, Gloucester, affected by his reproaches, replied, "that, were he certain they were in confidence, he should not have cause to complain of his reserve."—"It were to doubt his honour," the duke said, "to imagine otherwise."—"Well, then, my lord," cried Gloucester with animation, "believe that, whilst I have breath, I will never relinquish the delightful hope of calling Jaquelina mine!"—"What, then, you heed not the cause for displeasure you will give Burgundy—the train of evils you will draw upon yourself?"—"Ah! can any obstacle be forcible enough to counterbalance a hope which deprived of would make life joyless?"—"Pshaw! this is the mere language of a love-sick girl—beneath the duke of Gloucester's utterance."—"You would
C 6 have

have me, then, abandon Jaqueline?"—
 "Yes, where duty is concerned, our inclinations should give way."—"And does Bedford condescend to preach the dull stale maxims of frozen moralists?"—"I urge, then, the claims of Eleanor."—"Ah! I entreat you, name not that subject."—"Inconstant man! There was a time when a look, a smile from Eleanor conferred happiness on Gloucester!"—"Oh! if you love me, brother," cried the duke, catching the hand of Bedford, "cease your reproaches—Well, well I know I merit them."—"There is a degree of mystery," said Bedford gravely, "in your conduct towards that lady, which I confess is beyond my comprehension to penetrate."—"And it will ever remain so, my lord!" returned Gloucester rising with precipitation—"Let it then, I again entreat you, be banished our converse."—"Pardon me, brother!" cried Bedford warmly: "till reason is given me for preserving silence, I shall speak my
 mind

mind with freedom. The world, I well know, speaks loudly on this subject; but I heed not its idle tales. My respect for the lady Eleanor, and, above all, my confidence in my brother, make me reject with indignation what would reflect so much on both."

In saying these words the duke arose, and, without waiting for a reply, quitted the room.

CHAP. III.

THE situation, now, of the duke of Exeter, who, besieged by the dauphin in Paris, and from the smallness of his numbers, was in hourly danger of being made prisoner, called off the attention of the public from the princess's affairs to that which so much more concerned their interests.

Henry also felt it his duty, notwithstanding the situation of the queen pained him to think of quitting her, to fly to the relief of his uncle. Placing her and Jaquelina, therefore, under the immediate protection of his brothers, Bedford and Gloucester, he set sail for France ; where on his arrival he detached twelve hundred chosen horse, under the command of the earl of Dorset and the lord de Clifford, to the relief of the besieged.—On this reinforcement entering
the

the city, the dauphin presently withdrew his forces, and undertook the siege of Chartres.

In the mean time the king, having sent off divers detachments to reduce some castles in Picardy which still held out to the dauphin, marched in person with the rest of his army to Bois de Vincennes, and from thence went to Paris on a visit to his father-in-law. Understanding that the dauphin had invested Chartres, he directed his route to that place, in the hope of deciding the dispute by battle : but as he approached, the other retired ; and Henry pursued him for a considerable way, until, perceiving that he could not draw him to an engagement, he marched against Dreux, which place, without making the smallest resistance, surrendered at the first summons.

After the reduction of this place, his army was so terribly afflicted with a disorder which they had caught of its inhabitants, that he ordered them into quarters for refreshment, whilst he himself returned to
Paris,

Paris, where he formed the design of besieging Meaux, one of the most important places that owned the dauphin's authority. This siege commencing in winter, from the extreme inclemency of the weather, as well as from the valour of the besieged, who made incredible efforts in their own defence, Henry lost an infinite number of troops; whilst he himself, in consequence of the hardships he had undergone, found himself attacked by symptoms of the most alarming nature. Concealing however, as much as possible, his internal sufferings from the knowledge of his friends, he prosecuted the siege with unabated vigour, when he received the agreeable intelligence that Catharine was safely delivered of a son. This circumstance redoubling his courage, Meaux was soon compelled to capitulate; when Henry, still feeling greatly disordered, wrote to the queen, entreating her, the moment she could with safety travel, to suffer the duke of Bedford to escort her to France.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

CATHARINE, on the departure of the king, declining all share in the government, accompanied by Jaquelina, had retired to Windsor; at which place she was when Henry's letter arrived. The princess was with her at the time, and easily saw by her countenance it had given her concern. Conscious of the reasons which Jaquelina had for being uneasy under the guardianship of Gloucester, the queen felt that it was improper, from the circumstance of the duke of Burgundy's being at that time regent of France, to think of the princess's accompanying her—a circumstance that gave her much distress:—without therefore answering her hasty interrogatories, she gave in pitying silence the letter into her hands.

It may easily be imagined the uneasiness
the

the idea of this separation afforded Jaquelina ; but, concealing the poignancy of her feelings, from the fear of giving pain to her friend, she returned it with a sigh, saying, “ that no motive should retard her immediate compliance with the king’s requests.” Catharine, charmed at this instance of magnanimity, embraced her with admiration—and assured her, that, however separated, she should still pursue her interests with unabated zeal.

Before the queen quitted England, she had the young prince baptised by the name of Henry ; the princess, with the duke of Bedford and bishop of Winchester, standing sponsors. After this ceremony was over, which was celebrated with all the pomp and magnificence suitable to the occasion, Catharine, feeling herself in a condition to travel, signified to the duke of Bedford she was in readiness ; when that prince, having committed to the duke of Gloucester the reins of government, prepared

pared to accompany his royal charge to the expecting king.

Henry having made only slight mention of his illness, the queen was greatly shocked at the alteration a few months had made in his person—She concealed, however, as much as possible, how much she was affected, yet could not forbear tenderly reproaching him for the lightness with which he had treated so serious an indisposition.

The presence of a beloved consort, however, so facilitated the recovery of the king, that in a few weeks he felt himself able to gratify the filial impatience of his queen, who panted to embrace her beloved parents; and by slow journeys was proceeding towards Paris, when Charles and Isabella, eager to behold their Catharine, met them at Bois de Vincennes, where after staying a few weeks, they all proceeded to the capital.

Whilst Henry enjoyed this recess from the fatigues of war, the dauphin made himself

self master of La Charité, which opened a passage over the Loire, and afterwards invested Cosne on the same river, which agreed to surrender if not relieved by the duke of Burgundy. The duke's honour being thus engaged for the relief of that place, he sent to the king for a reinforcement of troops; and Henry gave him to understand that he would be there in person. He accordingly began his march for this purpose; but a relapse taking place of his former indisposition, he was obliged to halt at Senlis, from whence he was carried to Bois de Vincennes, after having bestowed the command of the army on Bedford, ordering him to join Burgundy with all expedition.

In the mean time Jaquelina, sensible of the extreme delicacy of her situation, confined herself almost a prisoner to Windsor Castle, in order to avoid as much as possible meeting Gloucester, who, whatever it might cost him, too sincerely respected

spected her to obtrude himself but when necessity or state required his visits.

This delicate conduct of the duke made a sensible impression on the mind of Jaqueline, and rendered her situation infinitely less irksome than what she had apprehended. Among the most constant of her visitants, and attended by all the pomp and state that wealth and power could give, was the bishop of Winchester; and the zeal with which he offered his services forced the princess, however reluctant, to consider herself as under obligations to a man whose proud and ostentatious demeanour filled her with disgust. The sacred profession of this nobleman, and above all, his near affinity to the crown, made it impossible to express the repugnancy with which she suffered his visits; yet the distance she preserved, and studied coldness of her manners when in his company, sufficiently shewed that she thought them too frequent. His lordship, however, either

not perceiving, or not choosing to perceive what Jaquelina tried to make as obvious as politeness would permit, continued with such assiduity to pay his devoirs at Windsor, as drew upon him the raillery of the court.

It must be confessed, that, among the faults of this prelate, that which appeared in Jaquelina's eyes the greatest was the little affection he evinced for the duke of Gloucester. As he frequently made this prince's foibles the subject of his conversation, it must not be wondered at that he was heard with impatience and disgust.

One day when his lordship with more than usual warmth was running over a numerous catalogue of Gloucester's faults, the princess, who had listened to this unpleasing detail with scarcely to be repressed disgust, found it impossible to withhold any longer from interrupting the reverend disclaimer—"I wish, my lord," cried she in a tone expressive of impatience, "I wish
some

some other topic than the faults of our friends were made the subject of our conversation." — The bishop coloured, and looked confounded. — "I have indeed pardon, madam, to beg," said his lordship hastily, "for so often introducing a subject that must be so uninteresting to the countess of Hainault; and I have only to plead in excuse, that, considering her in the light of a friend, I have been induced so often to speak on what affords me such cause for lamentation." — "It is with infinite surprise, my lord," returned the princess warmly, "I hear you speak thus of a prince whose character, setting aside a few blemishes, seems so universally admired!" — "Ah! madam, it is only the undiscerning populace that view him as you describe." — "Surely my lord of Winchester must grant *some* virtues to his nephew!" The bishop was silent. — "Confess he is brave!" — "I grant it, madam." — "Learned—with an extraordinary capacity!" — "It is not to be
6 disputed."

disputed.”—“Open, affable, and generous!”—“I agree he has all the qualities you mention.”—“Well, then, my lord, acknowledging the duke possesses all these rare endowments, I must rather condemn those who are his enemies for wanting discernment, than that crowd who so justly pay tribute to such merit.”

It is impossible to describe the inward rage these words excited in the bishop: yet, too much the courtier not to have his temper at command, he contented himself with observing to the princess, with an ironical smile—“That she at least had exempted herself from the charge of being deficient in discernment!” Then presently after rising, he bowed with more than usual state to the princess, and withdrew.

No sooner had his lordship departed than Jaquelina condemned herself for her severity, and the warmth with which she had defended Gloucester. She conjectured, and conjectured with truth, that she had by an unguarded

unguarded expression made an enemy of a man whose situation gave him the power of proving greatly detrimental to her interests.

From that hour the bishop conceived in his heart a dislike to the princess; and, though he still continued his visits, they were only now made to avoid the numerous conjectures that his absenting himself might occasion.

This prelate was a man rather cut out for the world and a court than for the church; yet historians allow him to have been learned, and of great capacity. From the moment his brother, Henry the Fourth, had given him the see of Winchester, his chief business had been to amass riches, wherein he had succeeded so well, that he was reckoned the wealthiest among all the English nobility. His nephew Henry the Fifth, however he respected his judgment, was afraid of his intriguing temper; and it was for this reason that he ever opposed the Pope's making him a cardinal, fearing that

dignity might afford him too wide a field to exercise his talents in.

The high spirit Gloucester possessed had made this proud churchman and him ever at variance, as he could ill brook paying that deference to his opinion which the other seemed to expect. Hence it was that the bishop, who knew the power Gloucester had over the mind of the king, imagined that the duke had secretly persuaded his brother to oppose his receiving the hat—a belief that so exasperated him against Gloucester, that only motives of policy made him conceal the rancour which swelled his heart.

During this time the malady of Henry increased to such a degree that his life was despaired of, and he began to prepare for death with that intrepidity and composure which through every event of his life had attended him. Feeling his last hour approaching, he sent for the dukes of Bedford and Exeter, the earl of Salisbury, and all the

the English nobility who happened to be in the neighbourhood, to hear his last instructions.

Addressing himself to them with an audible voice and an animated countenance, he observed, that his reign though short had been glorious; that though his wars had occasioned a great deal of bloodshed, yet it could not be imputed to him, but to the French, who refused to listen to equitable terms of accommodation: that, his conscience thus acquitting him in regard to France, he could meet death without the least apprehension; but, as a father, when he reflected on the helpless state in which he left the prince his son, his heart was wrung with agony. He besought his friends, therefore, in pathetic terms, to unite their interests and zeal in behalf of that young prince, who was born to be their sovereign, conjuring them to watch over his education with unremitted zeal. Then regarding his lovely consort, who was kneeling by his

side in speechless grief, with a look of the utmost tenderness—"I have spoken to you, my lords," continued the dying monarch, "of my feelings as a father; I would now speak to you of a husband's; but those—" and he took the hand of Catharine—"those the powers of language are insufficient to describe! Ye that are husbands, feel for me! Think the grief that would be yours at the prospect of an eternal separation from those beloved objects who have formed your earthly happiness! The thought unmans me.—Bear with this weakness, my lords," continued Henry, wiping away his tears—"and as ye love the memory of your Harry, regard his widowed Catharine!"

An effusion of tenderness, for a few moments, prevented his proceeding; when, remembering his situation, that perhaps a short time only was permitted him, he repressed his feelings, and turned to those subjects that immediately concerned the welfare

welfare of his people. He exhorted the lords to cultivate the friendship of the duke of Burgundy; and, whatever peace they might think it expedient to make with France, to preserve the sovereignty of Normandy to England. Finally he expressed a wish that the duke of Bedford would charge himself with the administration of affairs in France, and that the duke of Gloucester might govern England during the prince's minority.

Fatigued with this exertion, Henry now turned from his afflicted friends, and enquired of his physicians how long they thought he should live; when one of them kneeling by the bed-side, whilst the tears trickled down his cheek, declared that, without a miracle, two hours would put an end to his existence.

The king heard this dreadful sentence without emotion; and, having made confession of his sins, he ordered his chaplain to recite the seven penitential psalms.

When they pronounced these words—"Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem," he interrupted them, and declared that it was his intention to turn his arms against the infidels in the Holy Land, as soon as he should have established a solid peace with France.

This exercise of devotion was scarcely over before Henry, growing faint, sunk gently on his pillow, and expired.

Historians describe this prince (of memory so terrible to France), as possessing a self-taught genius that at once blazed out without the aid of instruction or experience, with a natural sagacity that made ample amends for these deficiencies;—that he was brave, chaste, temperate, modest, devout, scrupulously just in his administration, and severely exact in the discipline of his army, on which he knew his glory and success so much depended;—in a word, that he was without an equal in the arts of war, policy, and government.

In turning to the dark shade of his character,

rafter, they speak of him as being proud, imperious, and void of generosity : that the haughtiness of his temper lost him the hearts of the French nobility, who could ill brook the imperious treatment he sometimes gave them. His person they describe as being tall and slender ; of an engaging aspect, and limbs most elegantly turned ; that he was hardy, patient, laborious, and more capable of enduring cold, hunger, and fatigue, than any individual in the army ; his valour such, that no danger could startle nor any difficulty oppose ; whilst his policy was no ways inferior to his courage.

No heart, however, that possesses common feeling, can be so far dazzled by his great qualities as not to shudder when they reflect on the miseries which the indulgence of the most pernicious ambition brought on France ; that there the widow's and the orphan's cries were offered to heaven against him. Yet, as some extenuation of a conduct which seemed to set

at defiance every principle of justice, every consideration of humanity, it must be remembered that the Church sanctioned his claims, and urged him to so unjustifiable a war.

The death of Henry was no sooner known in England, than Gloucester, who executed the office of regent, issued out writs in the name of young Henry for a parliament to meet at Westminster; and in the mean time caused the young prince to be proclaimed at London.

The jealous rage which possessed the bosom of Winchester is scarcely to be described, when he learnt that Gloucester, by the late king's appointment, was to be invested with the high trust of protector to the realm. With difficulty could he restrain his anger from bursting forth against the memory of the deceased monarch, for a preference he esteemed so injurious. Wisely, however, he forbore expressing his sentiments, and affected only to feel for the duke

duke of Bedford, who was thus deprived of the rights of seniority. He seized, however, every opportunity to introduce the subject, and by his arguments at length prevailed on many of the lords to concur in his opinion, that a compliance with this desire of Henry would be doing a manifest injury to Bedford.

The parliament meeting at the appointed time, after a long and a serious debate, at length came to a determination which, without derogating from the rights of the elder brother, was consistent with the king's will.

They appointed, therefore, the duke of Bedford protector of England, defender of the church, and first counsellor to the king; with a clause that this prince should not exercise the office but whilst he was in England; and that Gloucester during his absence should fill that high station, and have a salary sufficient to support the dignity of his office. At the same time they ap-

pointed a council, by whose advice all the affairs of the kingdom should be referred to the protector; he having, in these deliberations, no other prerogative than being allowed a deciding voice in case of an equal division.

This important point being settled, they appointed governors to take charge of the king's person and education. These were Thomas Beaufort duke of Exeter, and the bishop of Winchester his brother.

A few days after the decease of Henry, the queen, taking a tender leave of her family, quitted France to attend the corpse of her deceased husband, which, by his desire, was to be interred in England.

Jaquelina no sooner heard of that princess's arrival than she hastened to meet her, and tried by her consolatory soothing to abate the poignancy of her sorrow for a loss which was so well deserving of being lamented.

The day following, the body of Henry,
attended

attended by a funeral pomp befitting the splendour of his reign and the esteem his subjects had conceived for him, was taken to Westminster, and laid by the side of his ancestors; whilst the queen, in honour of so illustrious a consort, placed on his tomb a figure in silver, as large as life, exactly resembling him.

Among those who most sincerely felt the death of this great monarch was our heroine, who, beside the cause for regret she had in losing a person for whom she had conceived the sincerest friendship and esteem, lost, with a zealous and powerful supporter, that protection which alone sanctioned her stay in England. With bitterness she now lamented the severity of her fate, which forbade her return to Hainault, and at the same time placed her in a situation so repugnant to her delicacy: yet, unwilling to add to the distresses of Catharine, by letting her perceive her inquietude, she was obliged, when in her company, to as-

sume a composure which was ill accordant to what was passing in her heart.

She scarcely now looked forward with any degree of hope to that prospect of deliverance from Brabant which had once so charmed her mind. As the duke of Bedford was solely occupied with the affairs of France, how little likely was it that he would busy himself with her concerns when subjects of immediate importance to his country demanded his attention ! And as to Gloucester, could she, consistent with any delicacy, apply to him ?

Another subject of secret grief was now afforded her, in remarking the perfect indifference the duke evinced for her society ; that, far from profiting by the privilege which his near relationship to the queen gave of often being in her company, where he might be sure of meeting with her, he scarcely ever was with that princess but when business called him ; and then his visits were so short, his manners so cold, so *distrain*,
that

that she could not but imagine his sentiments had undergone a thorough change. Sometimes she imputed this change to a renewal of his former regards for the lady Eleanor. This thought was insupportable, and any was preferable to one so mortifying to her vanity.

But imperfectly informed of the nature of Gloucester's attachment to this lady, and observing the little attention he ever paid her when in public, the princess had hitherto supposed that those reports which she had formerly heard respecting them were the mere fabrication of that scandal which ever prevails in courts. Her wishes, it must be confessed, seconded this belief; nor was she sorry to find that, in beauty, her glass allowed her the superiority over lady Ellen. But now that he appeared so little to court her society, when such frequent opportunity was afforded him of enjoying it, she could not, but by attributing it to this cause, otherwise account for so inconsistent a conduct.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

ONE day, having escaped from the painful task of wearing an appearance of serenity when her heart was a prey to the most afflicting ideas, freed from restraint, she had given herself up to all the luxury of woe, when from so sad an indulgence she was disturbed by one of her women, who, begging admittance, informed her, that the lord protector was at the gates, and desired to speak with her highness on matters of much importance.

The princess trembled—"What could the protector want with her?"—She, however, gave orders for his instant admittance, and in a few moments the duke was ushered into the apartment.

Jaquelina, with a ceremonious air, was rising to receive him, when, without attending to the distant salutation which she was preparing, with much emotion he put
into

into her hands a small packet, and vanished. Surprised above measure, the princess, with trembling haste, breaks open the seal, when inclosed she finds a paper signed by the Pope, which for ever freed her from the power of Brabant. Joy, gratitude, and surprise, for some time overpower her; she can scarcely give credit to her senses. Again she peruses a paper which had conveyed such ecstatic sensations of delight—and again she is made happy by an assurance she has not been deceived.

Impatient to communicate her happiness, she flies to the queen's apartment, and demanded her congratulations; when Catharine, though not a stranger to the event, participated in her joy with all the warmth that friendship could inspire.

A circumstance, however, which had at first escaped her observation, now serves in some measure to damp her happiness, on perceiving that the paper which dissolves her marriage with the duke is signed by
Benedict,

Benedict, who though acknowledged as Pope by great part of Europe, yet the Council of Pisa had deposed him, and bestowed that dignity on Calonne, who, in consequence, assumed the name of Martin the Fifth.

The queen, having warmly espoused the cause of Benedict, besides greatly esteeming his person, tried to reason her friend out of an objection which she beheld as light and inconsequential. But however Jaquelina respected her judgment, Catharine could not in this instance sufficiently reason her out of her scruples, to make her fully satisfied with the divorce not having been granted by Martin.

In order to account for the sudden and unexpected turn of fortune in favour of our heroine, it must be observed that Gloucester, from the moment of his being appointed to the protectorship, had made such earnest and incessant application to the court of Rome, that Benedict (to whom

it

it was at that time supposed that the pope-
dom would be given, and from this cir-
cumstance to him was referred the decision
of a point of so much importance), pitying
the princess's situation, instantly complied
with Gloucester's entreaties, and cancelled
a marriage which had occasioned her, from
its commencement, only misery.

During the absence of the ambassadors
who had been appointed to negotiate this
affair, the protector had suffered an anxiety
scarcely to be described. Hope and fear
alternately swayed his bosom, and the pre-
sence of Jaquelina, far from calming his
emotions, served but to increase them.
Unwilling that she should experience any
portion of those sensations so tormenting,
he carefully concealed from her knowledge
his application to Rome; and the fear of
letting the secret escape his lips, had made
him shun her society.

The delight which the duke felt when he
beheld the accomplishment of his wishes is
easy

easy to be imagined : his heart whispered the ecstatic thought, that soon Jaquelina would be his ! and, with all the impatient haste of a lover, no sooner had he received a packet which promised him so much happiness than he hastened to the princess. Delicacy alone restrained him from then avowing the hopes, the expectation, that he had formed. Dreading lest she should look upon his immediate application as taxing her gratitude, and finding it was impossible to behold the woman he had so long fondly loved restored to liberty, and not avow his passion ; to preserve his resolution he was obliged to make an abrupt retreat. More than one day, however, he found it impossible to let Jaquelina remain in ignorance of his sentiments ; when, after passing a sleepless night, he arose early in the morning, and, whilst she was breakfasting with the queen, made his appearance.

A crimson blush overspread the cheeks of the princess at his approach ; so conscious

scious did she feel, that it seemed as if she were already apprised of the purport of his visit. Catharine soon discovered that her presence was unwished for by the protector; and, notwithstanding the petitioning eyes of Jaqueline seemed to entreat her stay, she presently found some pretext for absence, and left him at full liberty to make that avowal which she perceived was already at his lips.

Scarcely had she departed, before Gloucester, at the feet of the princess, poured forth all those tender effusions which an ardent and generous passion, long suffering from restraint, and now at full liberty, could inspire. A few scruples which delicacy suggested, the duke alone had to combat; and over these love, and the tender entreaties of an ardent admirer, soon appeared to triumph; when a recollection of the divorce not being granted by the acknowledged Pope suddenly coming across her memory, rendered her inflexible to whatever

ever he could urge. Surprised and afflicted beyond measure at the steadiness of a refusal so little to be expected, and scarcely knowing how to continue a suit which was so firmly opposed; yet still less able to bear the idea that he must abandon it, Gloucester was reduced to a state truly deserving of pity; when the princess, at length compassionating his distress, acknowledged from what cause her rejection had originated.

It may easily be imagined this objection was treated as light and frivolous, and all the powerful rhetoric of love was employed to remove it.—“Does the addition of a few voices, lovely Jaqueline,” cried the duke, “in favour of Calonne, diminish the powers or judgment of Benedict? and is he not acknowledged by half Europe? Are we, whose happiness is so immediately concerned, to be amongst those who, from mercenary or envious motives, have opposed him? Contrast his character with that of Martin’s, and I will let your own heart

heart decide to whose judgment you would rather submit."

So many arguments beside these did the duke employ, that Jaquelina, before he withdrew, being perfectly convinced by the force of his reasoning of the folly of her scruples, had consented to become duchess of Gloucester. A few weeks only elapsed before the union of the lord protector and the princess of Hainault was announced to the regent, who had since the death of Henry resided in France.

After what has been before said, it is not to be imagined that Bedford derived any pleasure from this intelligence; yet, too wise to remonstrate when an evil was past remedying, he forbore, in his letters to his brother, saying any thing that might be termed reproach.

About this time died Charles the Sixth, king of France; and from his death a total revolution took place in the affairs of that kingdom.

Many

Many of the French nobility, who had thought it their duty to obey the king, without examining narrowly whether his conduct was for the advantage of their country, now believed themselves under the same obligations to the dauphin, notwithstanding the treaty of Troye, which they began to consider as the effect of violence and compulsion. The duke of Bedford was not ignorant of their sentiments; and therefore the eyes of Charles were no sooner closed than he proclaimed Henry king of France, and assumed the title of regent, according to the appointment of his late brother Henry king of England. Then assembling all the French noblemen who adhered to the cause of England, he made them take an oath of allegiance to young Henry; exacting the same also from all the towns that were under the dominion of the English.

The duke of Burgundy, from his hatred, as well as from the injuries he had received
from

from Charles in the person of his father, resolved to observe with strict punctuality the articles of alliance with the English.

Among those who, beside the duke of Bedford, supported the cause of Henry in France, was the duke of Somerset, the earls of Salisbury, Warwick, Arundel, and many other officers of distinguished valour and conduct; whilst Charles, though he had indeed assumed the name of king, unsupported by either the dukes of Burgundy or Bretagne, two of the most powerful vassals of the crown, drained by his wars with England of both money and troops, his revenues being all mortgaged, was reduced to such distress, that he was unable to bring an army into the field, and saw himself driven as it were beyond the Loire, without any prospect of being able to retain the places he still held about Paris.

The regent saw that this was the critical moment for striking a blow which would at once terminate the wars in France, and
give

give to his nephew the entire possession of that kingdom. Accordingly he wrote to his brother for supplies to effectuate a purpose of such importance; but to his surprise and excessive mortification, although he knew it was in the protector's power to afford him what was sufficient to answer his necessities, a supply of money and troops was sent him very inadequate to accomplish so great a design.

How few characters are there but what some shadow tarnishes their lustre! Ambition, as it will appear, was that which threw a transient cloud over Gloucester's, and darkened those bright pages in the English history which were adorned with the events of his life. No sooner had he gained possession of the princess, than he began to make preparations for asserting her claim to the dominions of her father.

Historians would willingly have excused this conduct, had not superior claims demanded his attention; but remembering
that

that he was not ignorant of the great number of garrisons his brother was obliged to keep in France, where there was neither town or castle but was fortified, and which must quite have drained the English army, the most lenient cannot but condemn with severity his not affording to the regent those troops which he employed to aggrandise himself.

Bedford, apprised of his intention, warmly entreated of him to put off the execution of his designs till a more convenient season, when he might be able to employ all the force of France and England. But his remonstrances were not capable of diverting the ambitious Gloucester from an enterprise which gave him the prospect of obtaining four of the finest provinces of the Low Countries. He was a younger brother, and the succession to the crown of England, supposing the king his nephew should die, would come to his brother before him : for this reason he looked upon

himself as obliged not to neglect an opportunity which would raise him above the rank of a subject. Before, however, he could make this expedition against Hainault, he was obliged to ask the consent of council, where, among those who opposed the undertaking, was his uncle the bishop of Winchester.

This prelate, since the death of the king, and the marriage of Gloucester with Jaqueline (a circumstance which had greatly increased his jealous hate), could no longer confine that rancour which filled his heart within any bounds; but on every occasion he opposed his measures, and sought to lessen him in the eyes of the people.

It has already been observed, that the duke of Gloucester was not so great a master of his passions as Bedford: he could ill brook any opposition; and the crafty Winchester frequently laid a snare for exposing this failing to those lords who were not so much attached to the protector, but that they
were,

were in some small degree jealous of his rising fame. As they held not their places of him, but of parliament, they were not so much afraid of incurring his displeasure, knowing that it was not in his power to turn them out; and therefore, in the council-hall, there was a sort of confederacy, headed by the bishop of Winchester, which seemed on all occasions to act as a guard to prevent his assuming a greater authority than his station could justifiably entitle him to.

Although the opposition on this occasion were certainly in the right, having plainly manifested the prejudice the undertaking would bring to the king's affairs, yet the protector's interest prevailed; and the council approving of his project, he set out on the expedition, not however without a mind embittered against his uncle, and with a determination to be revenged the first opportunity that offered. Taking with him, therefore, a body of five thousand men, he

and the princess quitted England, and arrived at Calais, where some necessary business for some time detained him.

The duke of Burgundy, notwithstanding he was entirely in the interest of Brabant, still continued his good understanding with England, in the hope that the duke of Gloucester, satisfied with the possession of Jaquelina, would drop his pretensions to her property, seeing that the duke of Bedford was so resolutely averse to the attempt being made.

Philip had bestowed on this prince his youngest sister Anne of Burgundy, a beautiful virgin, scarce exceeding the age of fifteen; and he now felt a double tie attach him to the English: for this reason he had failed to resent the marriage of Gloucester with his cousin.

The arrival of the English troops at Calais gave him no manner of alarm, as he readily conjectured that they were sent from England to assist the regent: therefore, whilst

whilst Gloucester staid at Calais, Burgundy was at Paris partaking of the diversions and entertainments given by Bedford in consequence of his marriage with the young princess his sister; and upon his return, still secure in this belief, he concluded his marriage with Bonne of Artois, widow of Philip earl of Nevers, his uncle.

Whilst these nuptials were celebrating at Dijon, the lord protector set out from Calais, and marched towards Hainault with his wife. They passed through a part of the duke of Burgundy's dominions without suffering their troops to commit any ravages, and came before Bouchain, which opened her gates to receive them. Quickly after, all the other towns in Hainault submitted to his arms, swearing fealty to him and the duchess.

This news reaching the duke of Burgundy, he ordered his two head generals, Signy and L'Isle Adam, to draw an army together, and join the count of St. Pol,

who was making preparations at Brussels to aid his brother the duke of Brabant. Yet still unwilling to take any measures which might prove the means of a rupture with England, he first appointed a meeting with the regent, and, in the name of Brabant, who had empowered him, offered to submit the decision of the affair to Pope Martin. Bedford, well satisfied with a proposal so apparently equitable, gave his immediate concurrence, and immediately wrote to his brother the offer of the duke; but Gloucester, who from certain information had learnt that Brabant, as well as Burgundy, had been tampering with Martin, well knowing also that the latter holy personage would be happy to pass any sentence which might set aside his opponents, positively refused to abide by his decision, or to be upon any terms of accommodation with Brabant. Highly resenting the haughty terms in which this answer was couched, the duke of Burgundy, in his orders to his
generals

generals for levying troops, declared that Brabant, however injured, had agreed with himself and the regent to an expedient at once just and equitable, which would immediately have put an end to a dispute that now threatened such fatal consequences, but which Gloucester had most insultingly refused.

The protector, incensed at this assertion, wrote a letter to Burgundy from Mons, taxing him with having advanced untruths; which the duke answered by giving Gloucester the lie, and offered to maintain his assertion by single combat, to be judged by his brother the regent. Gloucester, who disliked the character of Burgundy, gladly accepted the challenge; and the festival of St. George was the day appointed for the combat. Unwilling to alarm the tender fears of Jaquelina, he so contrived that she was kept in perfect ignorance of the circumstance; but this concealment, however well intended, proved in the end but too fatal to his happiness.

In the mean time the count of St. Pol besieged the little town of Braine in Hainault, defended by the English; where after a faint resistance the garrison having capitulated, the Brabanters violated the articles, put the English to the sword, and took the town. Whatever cause for resentment this conduct gave Gloucester, yet, having agreed upon a truce with the duke of Burgundy till their combat should decide the event, he forbore taking any revenge, contenting himself with warmly remonstrating with that prince on the injustice and cruelty of such proceeding; when immediately Burgundy, by a few words only to his kinsman, put a stop to these hostile proceedings, and peace for the present was restored to that country.

Gloucester, having seen the princess acknowledged by all the inhabitants of Hainault, began to turn his thoughts towards England; when the people of Mons, at which place they had chiefly resided, shewed such extreme reluctance to part with their
sovereign

sovereign so soon, that he could not resist their urgent entreaties to spend a few weeks longer in that city. The testimonies they gave of their gratitude for this condescension, and the lively affection they evinced for Jaquelina, charmed the duke; and he felt grieved when the time approached that was to call him from a people who had rendered themselves so dear to him. On the eve preceding his and the princess's departure, the chief magistrates and principal citizens beset the palace, and, in the most moving terms, besought the duke to allow the princess to remain behind. "It is long," cried they, "since we have enjoyed the presence of a sovereign. We pant for an opportunity being afforded us of manifesting our love. Ah, then, great prince! listen to our prayers, and suffer the daughter of our beloved William to gratify her dutious subjects a few months with her presence! More we dare not—we do not ask."

The duke and duchess were affected; and Gloucester, though loth above measure to be separated from his beloved wife, could not but be sensible of the advantage of securing to her the affections of her people: yet, in seeing the reluctance of Jaquelina to a parting, his own was redoubled, and a few moments he remained irresolute—when, banishing a sentiment which self-love created, and considering the injury he should do the interests of her so dearly loved, he employed the most powerful persuasives to induce her to comply with the wishes of her subjects.

Divided betwixt love and duty, Jaquelina knew not how to act—After the sufferings she had undergone, so soon to be parted from an object so fondly loved! Seas to divide them!—The solemn engagements which she had entered into then called her attention from those selfish regrets; and, as she reflected that she had pledged her faith to consider the interests

terests and happiness of her people before her own, she consented, not however without sighs the most bitter, to their entreaties. The idea of the approaching separation prevented either Jaquelina or the duke from tasting repose. Sad presentiments hung heavy on the heart of the princess, which not all the reasoning of Gloucester could dissipate. At length the morning so dreaded by both arrived; and the duke, after having summoned the chief magistrates, and exacted from each of them a solemn oath that they would protect his beloved consort with their lives, committed her to their care. Then, without staying to receive the acknowledgments they were preparing for this proof of his confidence, with an aching heart he sought his Jaquelina. She had heard his hasty step; and conjecturing he was coming to give her his last adieu, pale and trembling she sunk upon a couch as he entered. Tears in quick succession chased each other down

her beauteous cheeks, whilst deep and convulsive sighs rent her heart. Gloucester flew to her, and, enfolding her in his arms, tried to re-assure her drooping spirits; but he too much partook of her emotions to speak that comfort she so much required:—and as he pressed her to his troubled bosom—as he heard the deep burst of anguish which issued from hers—when, in a voice interrupted by sighs, he heard all those endearing expressions, those tender charges which a lively and apprehensive love could dictate, his resolution gave way, and he began to condemn himself for ever having consented to a separation from an object so beloved.

In vain he tried to combat this weakness. To save himself from sinking under it, he felt he had no resource but in flight; and snatching her once more to his agitated bosom, he tore himself from her arms, and, quickly mounting his gaily-caparisoned steed, with all the speed it would carry him he galloped through streets
lined

lined by an admiring multitude, many of whose hearts, gladdened by his bounty, sent after him their prayers and blessings. The eyes of the princess followed the duke till his swift courser had conveyed him far from her sight, when, no more able to rest them on an object so loved, she abandoned herself to a most violent passion of grief. However dear she felt he was to her, yet she could not account for those deep and bitter agonies which rent her heart at a separation which a few months was to terminate. She tried to conquer them by this thought, when a fatal presage seemed to tell her they should meet no more; and again she became a prey to the most lively transports of sorrow. His parting adieu, still sounded in her ear; still she felt his manly tears fall on her cheek—and still was present to her that look of tenderness and grief which he cast upon her, when as if for the last time he pressed her to his breast.

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She could not but fancy that, had he not felt similar sensations to hers, his fortitude would not have sunk under the idea of so short an absence.

The important concerns of government, however, soon called her mind from suggestions so tormenting, and allowed her little time for self considerations; but the few moments which were not employed for the benefit of her people were given to Gloucester.—She saw him high-spirited, elate and flushed with success, surrounded by men whom his superior advantages, and, above all, his situation, had made enemies; yet, however impatient of opposition, too proudly conscious of his superiority to make any concessions that might soften them towards him. She remembered with apprehension the enmity which subsisted betwixt him and his uncle Winchester; and she trembled as she reflected on the dangers his proud and impatient spirit might subject him

him to in a contest with a man so crafty, so designing, and so much a master of his passions, as was that prelate.

Although the letters of the duke, warm and impassioned, and expressive of the most tender regrets at the necessity of their absence, rendered her perfectly easy as to the continuance of his love; yet, when speaking of those whom he esteemed his enemies, particularly of his uncle, they breathed a haughtiness, a violence, which filled her with the liveliest apprehensions.

The bishop of Winchester had taken advantage of the absence of Gloucester to lessen him in the eyes of the people; he magnified his faults, and particularly dwelt on his ambition, of which he had given such a recent proof in his expedition against Hainault; an expedition which he spared no pains in proving had been so highly injurious to the affairs in France.

Certain it is that the war with Hainault had kept that of France in suspense; as
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the regent, not receiving necessary supplies from this unhappy diversion of troops, was no more able than Charles to bring an army into the field ; whilst to that prince's affairs nothing could have been more favourable than Burgundy's having broken with Gloucester, a circumstance he looked upon as being preparatory to his giving up all connection with the English, and he immediately took measures to improve it to his advantage.

The uninterrupted successes which Gloucester had met with, so far from having abated the natural haughtiness of his temper, had rendered him infinitely less than ever able to bear with moderation that opposition which he found had gained ground in his absence. Yet, had he been convinced that those who now so continually opposed his measures were actuated purely from conscientious motives, his love for his country and for his king would have made him in his cooler moments commend them :

them: but, when certain that their conduct originated in the envy and jealousy of Winchester, that he was the secret cause of all the mortifications he received, that his opposers were but the creatures of his will, his anger mastered his reason, and his whole soul boiled with fury against that designing and ambitious prelate. In a short time their mutual dissensions were carried to that height, that they both began to arm their friends, either to attack or defend; when Winchester, having few warriors on his side, by no means found his account in opposing by arms an adversary so redoubtable as Gloucester. The intrigues of a court or cabinet were more within his province; and therefore, to prevent the mischief that threatened him, he wrote to the duke of Bedford an earnest entreaty that he would come to England, informing him that, without he made all imaginable haste, the kingdom would be exposed to the most fatal commotions by the

the violent temper of his brother. The regent, dreading the ill consequences of such a quarrel, obeyed without delay a summons so alarming, leaving in France Richard de Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, to command in his room.

CHAP. VI.

AS soon as the duke set foot in England, the power of Gloucester ceased, and he assumed the title of protector. The duke of Bedford, having first settled some foreign affairs of moment, now set about procuring a sincere reconciliation between the duke his brother and the bishop of Winchester. The way to succeed, he felt, was to side with neither. Had he taken, as the ties of blood seemed to require, his brother's part, he would not have shewed himself qualified to discharge the office of a mediator. He had, besides the character of brother and nephew, another to sustain in order to perform his duty, and answer the high expectation the public had formed of him. Therefore, wisely not taking upon him the sole management of so nice an affair, he convened some of the principal nobility at
St. Albans,

St. Albans, in hopes of being able, with their help, to find some means to content the two princes. But their animosity was so great that it was not possible to succeed this way: they were forced, after many fruitless endeavours, to refer the decision of the affair to the ensuing parliament, which was to meet at Leicester in March.

The parliament, having met, appointed commissioners to examine what had been alleged on both sides; when Winchester having brought some trifling charges against his nephew, which the lords instantly dismissed as being frivolous, Gloucester, on his part, exhibited articles of a nature the most serious against that prelate. However conscious the bishop was of having merited these impeachments, he had the art, either by explaining to his advantage such as were too flagrant to be denied, or by directly refusing any knowledge of those which required farther evidence, so effectually to clear himself in the eyes of the commissioners,

fioners, that the parliament, upon their report, fully acquitted him of the crimes with which he was charged.

Bedford was too well acquainted with the character of Winchester not to believe him very capable of having given his brother ample grounds for these accusations, however the lords, imposed on by his specious manners, had pronounced his innocence; but he was determined that Gloucester should not be a sacrifice to his enemy; and, to procure him some satisfaction, and humble his proud foe, he took the great seal from Winchester, and gave it to the bishop of London: then, believing it impossible that they could meet at the council-board without great prejudice to the king's affairs, he prevailed on the bishop, by a promise of a cardinal's hat, to accompany him to France.

The duke, before his departure, endeavoured to effect a reconciliation betwixt his brother and the duke of Burgundy; but
this

this he found impossible ; and all he could obtain was a consent to the desire of Burgundy for postponing the combat a few months.

Whilst the domestic peace of England was in some measure restored by the departure of the intriguing Winchester, and Gloucester began to count with impatience the few days which would now elapse before that should arrive which would give to his expecting arms his Jaquelina, a blow, alas the most fatal ! was preparing to destroy his happiness with that princess.

However quietly Brabant had appeared to have submitted to a transaction which at once struck at his interests and impeached his honour, it was merely in appearance ; as, from the moment the protector had espoused the princess, and secured her property, he had secretly planned a scheme for at once obtaining a revenge, and regaining those possessions he saw wrested from him. Had he employed open force against the duke,

duke, it would neither have been so consistent with his character, nor have afforded him his revenge on Jaquelina. It was by the exercise of those talents for intrigue which he so eminently possessed that he proposed to obtain his triumph. Having sufficiently gained the character of Gloucester, which he found to his wish was unsuspecting and open to kindness, although he had an army at command, he let matters take their course, and saw all Hainault submit to his power without making any attempts to oppose him. But during this time he had not been idle. Having secured, by large bribes, the interests of the chief magistrates of Mons in his favour, they had, in conformity to his directions, assumed that appearance of affection for Jaquelina which so effectually imposed on the duke. Charmed with the success of his artifices, Brabant already beholds the hapless victim surrendered to his power. With savage joy he feasts his imagination by a
 contem-

contemplation of the agonies that will be hers on finding herself betrayed. Scarcely had Gloucester quitted Hainault before the duke employed emissaries among the people, in order to shake their fidelity towards Jaquelina. In this negotiation he was assisted by the duchess of Bavaria, who, from the moment she had heard of her daughter's approach, had quitted that country, and taken up her residence with Brabant.

So successful did this secret treaty prove, that, in a short time, all the towns of Hainault declared in favour of Brabant; when, at the very moment of victory, whilst congratulating himself on the accomplishment of his revenge equally on the princess and Gloucester, he was attacked by a malignant fever.

Unable now himself to pursue his schemes, he left the conduct of the business to the count de St. Pol, who immediately placing himself at the head of a
numerous

numerous army, presented himself before Mons, where Jaquelina resided in full security of her people's fidelity. The perfidious magistrates feigned the utmost terror at his approach; declared themselves incapable of defending the town; and entered into a treaty to deliver up Jaquelina into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, until the dispute should be decided by the Pope.

As this equally base and barbarous agreement was transacted without the knowledge of the princess, it may easily be conceived the surprise, consternation, and horror, which seized her mind on beholding herself reduced from a state of happiness, which she had hardly ever hoped to have attained, to one whose misery could not be surpassed. Seeing it was in vain to contend against her cruel enemies, without lessening her dignity by useless reproach, she submitted to her fate with an apparent composure that astonished her treacherous foe. One fa-

vour, however, was granted to her entreaties, which greatly lessened her present terrors, that of being given to the protection of the prince of Orange instead of the count of St. Pol: and accordingly, under the conduct of that prince, she was forced from Mons, and taken to Ghent, where it was settled she should remain till the affair was terminated.

Arrived at that place, the prince having given express orders that the princess should be denied nothing that she could reasonably expect in a state of confinement, he took his leave, and left Jaquelina at full leisure to reflect on the miseries of her fate.

No description can do justice to the feelings of Gloucester when he learnt the situation of his Jaquelina. A thousand times he reproached himself for his credulity in trusting so dear a treasure to the protection of men of whose honour he had not had certain proofs. One moment he determined to abandon his protectorship and
fly

fly to her relief; but without an army to support him, how was his single arm to rescue her from the power of a mighty foe? And, during the time he could muster a force sufficient to oppose the duke, what miseries might she not have suffered? Perhaps (distracting thought!), perhaps she might be forced back to the arms of the detested Brabant. The agony this thought gave him was yet greater than the certainty of her death could have inflicted. The munificence of Gloucester's spirit, and the splendid state in which he lived, rendered it impossible for him, without the assistance of parliament, to attempt the rescue of the princess. Yet, so lately having experienced its liberality,—sensible, too, that Charles, from his increasing power in France, rendered it necessary for the English to employ all their force in order to preserve to them the conquests of Henry; how grating was it to his princely mind so soon again to task its bounty! How now did

he condemn himself for not having listened to the reasonable advice of Bedford ! How cutting were his self-reproaches ! But, waving all considerations as the idea of his *Jaqueline*'s danger presented itself, he determined, painful as it was, to petition for a supply.

The lords had met in council, when *Gloucester*, with an air hurried, and a countenance that denoted the distraction of his soul, presented himself at the board. Without taking his seat, he thus addressed them :

“ The subject on which I am going to petition you, I confess, my lords, requires many apologies : but you see before you a man too much disturbed by grief to be able to give utterance to other words than what are descriptive of that feeling—than what may serve to excite your commiseration. You are none of you strangers to the situation of the unhappy princess of *Hainault* ; that she, before whom nations have bowed, is

now

now a wretched prisoner in a country which owes her duty; basely betrayed by her subjects; delivered to the mercy of a man whose character merits the detestation of every generous mind; perhaps at this moment suffering every cruelty which his inventive malice can suggest. It is to afford me your assistance, my lords, in rescuing her from this monster, that I plead. Yet, conscious as I am that, to secure those possessions in France won by my ever-to-be-lamented Henry, this country is drained of its choicest treasure, how can I have courage to claim your assistance in avenging a private quarrel, when I behold it inimical to the public good? How twice presume to hope you will befriend me? Yet, oh! my lords, if that house from which it is my boast to have sprung was ever dear to you—if that man who so often has bled to serve his country's cause is regarded with any favour—now evince it; now afford some pity to his misfortunes; and, by sav-

ing her who is dearer to him than life, secure his eternal gratitude."

Excepting by those who were the immediate creatures of Winchester, Gloucester was greatly beloved; for, though the nobles were sometimes offended by the haughtiness with which he defended his opinions, yet, as they beheld his extraordinary talents, his dauntless courage, his many private as well as public virtues, they were in general disposed to shew indulgence to his faults, in consideration of his admirable qualities. The whole assembly were moved with his distress. They saw him vainly struggling with his feelings. They saw his great soul was moved even to agony; an agony which was doubled by the necessity of supplicating a second assistance. The absence of Winchester was a most fortunate circumstance for Gloucester. Each member was emulous to alleviate his misery; and Gloucester could not have received a higher proof of the estimation in which they held

held him, than by their coming to an unanimous agreement to petition the king to assign him the sum of five thousand marks out of the subsidy granted him, for the relief of the princess; and to advance also five thousand more upon the salary annexed to the protectorship.

With this aid the duke in haste mustered a little army for the rescue of the princess, when, on the eve preceding the day he purposes to quit England, a letter is put into his hand. He gazes on the superscription, and is lost in amazement. The characters appear to be those of a person dearer to him than worlds. With trembling eagerness he breaks open the seal, and with rapture finds it indeed to be from his adored Jaquelina. It was dated from Holland, and informed him, that, through the assistance of the friendly Kreutzer, she had effected her escape into that country, where she had been honourably received by some noblemen of distinguished character, who, hav-

ing warmly espoused her cause, had prof-
fered their services towards re-instating her
in the sovereignty of those dominions
from which she had so basely been exclud-
ed. She had, she said, more from a con-
sideration of duty than from inclination,
been led to accept their offers. Having
expressed some tender regrets at being un-
able for the present to visit England, the
princess concludes her letter with an en-
treaty that Gloucester would send a rein-
forcement of troops to the assistance of
those which her friends had engaged in her
service.

What transports of joy seized the heart
of the duke at these welcome lines ! A
thousand times he kissed with rapture the
precious paper which contained the writing
of his Jaquelina, which assured him of her
safety. Towards Kreutzer, the generous
Kreutzer, who had twice procured the
freedom of the beloved of his soul, he felt a
gratitude that language is inadequate to de-
scribe.

scribe. Yet, amidst sensations so ecstatic as those which now filled his bosom, some bitter murmurings escaped him at the necessity which still separated them.

The arrival of the bishop of Winchester, rendered, if possible, more haughty and overbearing than ever by his newly acquired dignity, made Gloucester relinquish the idea of flying to the assistance of his Jaquelina; now that he was relieved from all anxiety respecting her safety, being sensible that committing the protectorship to so powerful an enemy was plunging himself in inevitable ruin. Listening, therefore, to the urgent entreaties of his young friend Edwy (now earl of Fitzwalter by the death of a distant cousin), who panted to distinguish himself in the service of the princess, he committed the conduct of the troops to his care, and tried to render himself as easy as his love would let him, under a separation which he felt was unavoidable.

In the mean time Fitzwalter, assisted by a favourable wind, arrived in Holland, and was received by the princess with a sensation of pleasure not unmixed with pain. She had expected Gloucester; and his not flying to her assistance after the sufferings she had endured from his absence, poisoned the satisfaction she derived from seeing again the faithful Edwy, accompanied by a force which, added to that raised by her gallant friends, she hoped would rescue her lawful possessions from the power of Brabant. But, when she perused the letter which Fitzwalter presented her from the duke, which explained and lamented with bitterness the necessity of his stay in England, her good sense immediately approved the reasons that he gave, and she endeavoured to conquer her disappointment.

CHAP. VII.

IT will now be necessary to explain the circumstance of the princess's escape from Ghent.

In the first tumults of her grief after the departure of the prince of Orange, on beholding herself reduced from a state of happiness, beyond what she had ever expected, to that of a wretched prisoner; and, what infinitely more struck horror to her soul, the prospect of being forced to the arms of the detested Brabant, she wrote to Gloucester, describing, in the most moving terms, her reverse of fortune, and the perfidious conduct of her subjects; when, having given this vent to her feelings, upon reflection she thought it would be better to dissemble with her keepers, and to wear a face of resignation to her fate. This scheme met with success; for her guards, partly

deceived by this appearance of submission, insensibly so relaxed in their vigilance, that, had she met with the least assistance, she could, without difficulty, have effectuated her escape. Her youth, beauty, and above all the gentle patience with which she bore her misfortunes, made a sensible impression on their minds, and gave to their countenances an expression of pity which inspired her with a faint hope of obtaining her liberty from their compassion. But, doubtful whether she might not have mistaken the sentiments of her guards, she was deterred from making any attempts to shake their fidelity to Brabant, till more fully convinced of their willingness to serve her, from the fear of being abridged of that liberty which was so favourable to her hopes of freedom.

One day as she was ruminating on her misfortunes, and endeavouring to summon courage sufficient to hazard a disclosure to her guards of her intention of escaping from

'from the power of the duke, she was informed a stranger requested to speak with her. Perplexed and surprised at this demand, the princess, with a beating heart, gave orders for his admittance; when, what were the amazement and joy which took possession of her heart, at seeing the brave and generous Kreutzer enter her apartment! For some moments all painful reflections were lost in the pleasure this sight gave her; when, as the misery of her present situation, contrasted with that happy one in which when last they had met he had viewed her, forced itself to her mind, all her fortitude gave way, and she burst into tears. But now again she hears the soothing voice of comfort; now her spirits are re-animated by the charms of hope, as she listens, with sensations of the liveliest gratitude, to a scheme which the generous Kreutzer has planned for her deliverance. Convinced of its feasibility, should even a stricter guard have been placed over her motions,

motions, the princess readily gives way to the delightful prospect of again being restored to Gloucester; when, having settled with her friend what was necessary for her flight, fearful of exciting suspicion by his stay, she entreats him to begone.

The dusk of the evening following was appointed for her flight; when, as the time approached, and Kreutzer not appearing, the princess began to find her feelings scarcely supportable. Unfortunately, one of the guards she had observed to be the least disposed towards her had that evening the watch. Jaquelina, on perceiving this, trembled for the event. Every sound alarmed her; when, after waiting some minutes, which appeared to her as many hours, she heard the welcome voice of her friend parleying with her churlish guard. She listened with a beating heart, and fancied she heard him denied admittance. Her spirits die with fear, and all hope of ever escaping the power of the duke is forsaking her,

her, as Kreutzer, having at length contrived to satisfy the stern interrogatories of the imperious guard, enters the apartment. He finds her overcome with apprehension, and tries to reassure her agitated spirits. The sight of him restores her courage, and soon she is capable of bestowing some degree of attention, whilst he hastily accounts for his delay, by informing her of some difficulties he met with in preparing the necessary accommodation for her flight. Then, seeing her more composed, he presents her with the disguise by which he proposes to elude the vigilance of her guard, and entreats her to lose no time in equipping herself.

The princess gratefully received the clothes, and, after retiring for a few minutes, returned habited like her friend; when, having received some necessary instructions, and supplicated heaven to favour her design, with a palpitating heart and trembling step she quitted her apartment.

ment. Scarcely had she closed the door before she perceived her guard advancing. Intimidated at this sight she shrunk back, and, notwithstanding the risk she ran by a delay, was too terrified to proceed. Happily for her, she had escaped his observation, and she had now the felicity of perceiving him engaged in conversation with his comrade. Gathering courage from a circumstance so favourable, she seized the fortunate moment, and glided by them unheeded. This important difficulty surmounted, she soon reaches the great gates, when, assisted by the gloomy duskiness of the evening, the sentinels perceive not the little resemblance the delicate features of the princess bear to the bold and manly ones of him she personates.

Escaped the castle, with the swiftness of a lapwing she made her way through the city, and presently arrived at the place where Frederic had appointed to meet her; where, relieved from her terrors, and the
tumult

tumult of her spirits being somewhat abated; she bent in grateful adoration to that almighty Power who had afforded her his protection. In the mean time Frederic counted with impatience the moments that must intervene before the guard was changed; for, till the relief, he dared not venture to quit the castle. At length he heard the watch-word given. He hails the welcome signal which ensured him safety; and, without meeting with the smallest difficulty, was suffered to depart. He was soon with the princess, and scarcely a moment elapsed before they were mounted on two fleet couriers which he had provided for their flight.

During the journey Jaquelina questioned Kreutzer of his parents, and learnt from him, to her infinite pleasure, that they were both in safety. Her curiosity being excited to know by what means they had escaped the fury of the duke, Kreutzer informed her that his father, having presence of
mind

mind sufficient to conceal from the inhabitants of the castle her flight, had, during the night, embarked himself and his wife in a small fishing-boat which lay close to the shore; that, arriving the following day at a little town near Brabant, they quitted the vessel, and made the best of their way to the place where his Sophia lived. There they soon learned who was the author of their royal prisoner's escape; when thinking it unsafe to remain longer in a place where they were likely to be discovered, having obtained a promise from Sophia of visiting them as soon as her husband returned from England, they sought a more retired spot for their residence till fortune should change in their favour.

This account afforded the princess the most sensible pleasure, as it relieved her mind from the painful idea of having been the cause of bringing upon a worthy couple sorrow and disgrace.

Having

Having no longer now occasion for the services of the brave and generous Kreutzer, Jaquelina, though it pained her to part with him, considered the injustice of detaining him longer from his Sophia; and, having forced upon him some rich presents, more as testimonies of her friendship than as recompenses for his services, she gave him permission to depart.

Kreutzer, however, having inly determined on throwing up his profession, and embracing that which might be serviceable to his royal mistress, staid no longer than was necessary to conduct his family to Holland, where they had scarcely arrived before he led them to the feet of Jaquelina.

The princess having determined on flying to England, Kreutzer proposed, as the best method of eluding pursuit, that they should go by way of Holland; when scarcely had he named that country before Jaquelina recollected having in it two powerful friends of her father's, on whom she

she could rely for protection till an opportunity was afforded her of visiting it with safety. This plan agreed on, after a few days Frederic had the pleasure of seeing his royal charge received with rapture by two of the most powerful nobles in all Holland.

The princess no sooner had found herself in security than she communicated to her friends her intentions of immediately writing to Gloucester to send her over a vessel to conduct her to England; when they, burning with indignation against her enemies, and panting with generous ardour to revenge her wrongs, so earnestly implored that she would commit herself to their protection till they had seen her reinstated in her lawful possessions, that, however her inclination led her towards England, she felt it was a duty she owed herself to comply with their entreaties.

The determined bravery of the princess's troops, and the dauntless courage of their leaders,

leaders, gave considerable alarm to the duke of Burgundy.

This prince had an eye to the possessions of Jaquelina, and had secretly aided Brabant in his plot upon her person, thinking that, by confining her for life, he should effectually secure to him or his heirs her property.

This honourable intention not only being entirely frustrated by the princess's escape, but beholding also many of those places which he had already contemplated as within his grasp torn from him, no longer could he preserve the mask which policy had made him wear; and assembling a considerable power, he dispatched it to the relief of his cousin, who, though still too much an invalid personally to oppose the princess, yet had sent against her a mighty force commanded by the count of St. Pol.

This reinforcement proved a powerful check upon the successes of Jaquelina's army,

army, and the contest was now sustained with mutual advantage to both parties. Months had been spent in continual attacks and fallies, without either party being able to decide which had the advantage; when in some measure, from the rash ardour of Fitzwalter to signalize himself, the affairs of the princess began to assume an unpromising aspect. The sage veterans who commanded the Dutch forces had unanimously agreed to avoid for the present, if possible, coming to a close engagement; for, having observed that numbers of Jaquelina's subjects daily flocked to her standard, they were in hopes, by this delay, of gaining time to collect an army sufficient at once to crush their foe. But this tardiness ill suited with the impatience of our young warrior, who equally panted to see the princess restored to the possession of her rights, and to distinguish himself in her service.

In reconnoitring the enemy's forces, he
had

had observed that the Burgundian general had posted his men upon a narrow piece of ground, situated at the declivity of a hill, and flanked by a rivulet and a thick wood, where he could not extend his front so as to enclose the English; where his cavalry could not act, and his superiority of numbers would only prove an incumbrance instead of an advantage. Auguring the most happy success should an engagement take place, he called a council of war, and proposed taking immediate advantage of a situation which so highly favoured them: but the elder part of the assembly, for the reasons before mentioned, warmly opposed hazarding a battle where the force was so unequal, and absolutely refused to afford their assistance in the attack. Unconvinced, however, by their arguments, he could not be persuaded to abandon an enterprise which promised to crown him with so much glory. And finding them resolutely bent on not giving him any support,

he

he determined to trust to his own high courage, and that of his troops, for securing the success of his undertaking. Without losing a moment's time, therefore, he marshalled his little army; and having provided them with all necessaries, he marched them towards the spot where the enemy was encamped, in order to bring them to battle; when, arriving within the distance of a league from their camp, having drawn up his men on a convenient spot for battle, he dispatched a herald with a message of defiance. The challenge being accepted, the day following was fixed on for the action.

During the intermediate time the young earl, with the assistance of Kreutzer, who had felt too much attached to his friend not to share his danger, made an excellent disposition of his men; and, with a prudence and foresight that would have done honour to an old experienced warrior, made the necessary preparations for the ensuing engagement.

At

At break of day both armies were drawn up in order of battle : the Burgundian general divided his army into three bodies, commanding the van himself—whilst Fitzwalter, in order to extend the front of his, equal to the enemy, was obliged to form his little army into one line : the right wing, commanded by Kreutzer, was advanced a little before the centre, which he took under his own immediate command, attended by some chosen veterans. Mounted on a stately courser, he appeared in front in splendid armour ; whilst his helmet, adorned with a snowy plume of ostrich feathers, nodded gracefully at every motion. A number of led horses, richly caparisoned, followed ; and he was surrounded by a little troop of youthful warriors, who burnt with impatience to engage. High hope was painted on every visage ; and the soldiers, catching the enthusiasm of their leaders, seemed by their looks to reproach the tardiness of their foe, who, startled at

the firm countenance and admirable disposition of the English, stood for some time in array without advancing to the attack.

Fitzwalter, partaking of their eagerness, now rode along the lines, exhorting and encouraging his men to behave like Englishmen; then seeing the Burgundian chief still motionless, he alighted from his horse, and, throwing up his truncheon as the signal for attack, took his station in the main body. Immediately the whole line, setting up a loud shout, charged the enemy with such incredible impetuosity as instantly put one of the enemy's wings into disorder.

The battle was begun by a flight of arrows, which did great execution, as the Burgundians, being drawn up on the declivity of a hill, were immediately exposed to every shaft of the bowmen, who plied them so vigorously that no armour could resist their force. The Burgundian general saw their advantage, and ordered his men at arms to advance and attack the archers,

archers, who retired as they approached, still letting fly their arrows, till the enemy, fatigued with the weight of their arms, and sorely pierced with their arrows, seemed no longer able to resist them.

Fitzwalter now led up his division to the charge, and, being animated by the success of his first effort, added to his natural courage and vivacity, performed exploits of valour which astonished his own soldiers and those of the enemy. Victory now seemed decidedly in favour of the English; when, from the fatal impetuosity of the young general, who, followed by Kreutzer and a few more, rushed on with such precipitation that the soldiers could not keep pace with them, the line, which they had broken by their violence, closing again, intercepted their retreat, and by this turned the fortune of the day.

Fitzwalter and his friend fought close by one another, and performed miracles of valour with the few who had followed their

footsteps; but, all their followers being slain, they found themselves hemmed in on all sides, without any possibility of being joined or relieved by the rest of the forces, who knew not how to act when thus deprived of their leaders. Too late the unhappy earl repents of that fatal rashness which has undone himself and friend, and the direful stroke which levels him to the earth is not so agonizing as his own reflections. A purple tide now issues from his gaping wounds, and stains his polished cuirass. The destructive steel forsakes his grasp. Pale grows his cheek. A hovering mist appears before his eyes; yet before he forever closes them, he casts them with expressive anguish on his friend, and then resigns himself to death.

The Burgundian general seeing the confusion of the English, placed himself at the head of a party of reserve, and falling in among them made a terrible havoc; whilst Kreutzer, thirsting with a desire of revenging

revenging the death of his friend, with more than mortal bravery forced his way back to his own troops, and, quickly rallying them, all opposition failed before them; till unfortunately the fall of their general reaching their ears, at once all their courage fled, and a few only escaped the general carnage which now took place.

Kreutzer, upon finding himself thus deserted, thought only how to secure his retreat; and remembering that Fitzwalter had placed a party of skilful bowmen in an adjacent wood, though faint and fatigued with his exertions, yet he resisted with astonishing valour the party which now had surrounded him; and drawing them towards the spot where his friends lay in ambuscade, presently his assailants, to their utter confusion and dismay, found themselves pierced by a thousand wounds, whilst an armed band, instantly rushing on, destroyed or put them all to flight. This disaster was a sad blow to the interests

of the princess; yet the loss of the gallant Firzwaker more sensibly affected the heart of Jaquelina than even what threatened such fatal consequences to her affairs.

CHAP. VIII.

THE regent, who had beheld with scarcely to be suppressed indignation his letters to England unanswered, his demands unheeded, and by these neglects all his great designs upon France rendered abortive, had now the additional mortification of foreseeing, that, from the obstinacy of his brother, an entire breach would soon take place between Burgundy and the English. He was not ignorant that Charles, profiting by this rupture between the princes, had employed several prelates of distinguished character in order to detach him from Henry. These endeavoured to excuse the French monarch with regard to the death of his father, by saying he was misled by evil counsellors; when the duke, though irritated against Gloucester and the English in general, not having entirely forgotten his

father's affassination, returned for answer, that when his majesty should have banished those evil counsellors it would then be a proper time to talk of an accommodation.

The duke of Bedford suspecting, however, that Burgundy began to listen to the solicitations of Charles, knew that the best way to preserve his alliance with England was by tempting his avarice, and accordingly ceded to him all the places which the English possessed in Champagne and Brie.

He had scarcely, at this enormous expence, for some time secured the continuance of this prince's alliance, when he learned the defeat of the English troops which had been sent to Holland. Not doubting but that Gloucester would strain every nerve in order to make up to the princess for this loss, and having an absolute want of some supplies himself, in order to quell a dangerous insurrection which had taken place among the peasants in Normandy,

mandy, he was reduced to a state of the utmost perplexity and distress, when a circumstance happened which in some measure relieved him from a situation the difficulties of which he scarcely knew how to support.

It has been observed before, that the circumstance of the duel which was to take place betwixt the protector and Burgundy had been carefully concealed from Jacqueline; but now that Gloucester, thrown off his guard by the success of that prince, in the warmth of his resentment let fall certain expressions in his letters which at once explained to her the important secret; it may easily be conceived the effect it had on her mind. Her warm and rapid imagination immediately presented the beloved, of her soul, covered with wounds, extended breathless on the ground. From such an image she recoiled with horror.

In the distraction of her soul she wrote to the regent, entreating his assistance in

endeavouring to conciliate the minds of the princes, and offering to make any sacrifice herself that would appease the aspiring Burgundy. The duke of Bedford, notwithstanding the anger he had conceived against the princess, could not but feel moved as he perused a letter which was so strongly descriptive of the agonies of her mind; but his patriotism triumphed over the compassion he felt for her sufferings. He beheld it a duty he owed his country to take that advantage which her terrors offered in its favour; and accordingly he wrote to her to this effect :

“ To Jaquelina, Princess of Hainault.

“ Sensible of the injury a fatal union has brought on England, it is impossible for Bedford to address the princess of Hainault as he could wish to address a sister. Yet, in spite of this remembrance, he commiserates the feelings of a wife who beholds herself

self the cause of endangering the life of a husband. To avert this evil, you supplicate my assistance—my advice. On yourself alone depends the safety of Gloucester. Yes, madam, I repeat, it is given you at once to ensure from present danger that life for which you tremble, and redeem that high idea of perfection which, till one circumstance served to lessen it, I had formed of Jaquelina. Need I say it was her marriage, her illegal marriage with my brother!—I feel for the wound I am compelled to inflict. I see the high indignation that fills your bosom; but throw aside that veil in which love has contrived to envelop your senses, and, the delusion being no more, you will perceive the justice of my assertion.

“ No motive but necessity should make me thus afflict you. My anger vanishes at your distress. Imprudent, unhappy princess, into what a sea of trouble hast thou not plunged thyself! And it is only left

thee, by a superior effort, to save thyself from perhaps everlasting self-reproach. Consent, then, to abide by the decision of the Pope, and Burgundy will no longer be at variance with him you love. Virtue demands this sacrifice from Jaqueline, and with his life Bedford will answer for the event."

No trial that the princess had ever undergone had equalled this—No pen could do justice to those conflicts which rent her bosom!—To be afforded the means of saving Gloucester, perhaps from death! and not embrace it, was distraction;—whilst the probability that she might be restored to Brabant was yet more perfect misery.

Ah, had Bedford but required the sacrifice of her life, with what rapture would she have yielded it! But, to give herself to Brabant, that detested monster, was a sacrifice she felt beyond her strength; a sacrifice that even shook her love for Gloucester.

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cester. But when again her fancy presented him sinking beneath the murderous sword of Burgundy—when that loved form, on which she so fondly doted, appeared to her mangled, disfigured, and convulsed with pain, she could no longer hesitate; and, in her answer to Bedford, she consented to any terms but that of being forced to the arms of Brabant.

It was necessary, the regent well knew, in order to bring his plans to effect, that the protector should be kept in ignorance of his transaction with the princess: he therefore, unconscious of the operations which were making against his happiness, not content with stripping himself of all his wealth to supply the wants of his Jaquelina, anxiously devoted a portion of each night to the study of her interest.

The animosity which had formerly subsisted betwixt him and his uncle the bishop of Winchester, now cardinal Beaufort, and, from his being of the blood-royal, generally

ally styled cardinal of England, had entirely subsided on his part; whilst the prelate's, like a fire that had been half smothered, glowed more intensely than before. He had already acquired a very dangerous influence among the people, and seduced a great number of the duke's partisans by large bribes. These endeavoured to inflame the people against the protector, by loudly inveighing against the extravagance of the court, the ambition of the duke, and his ruinous war in Holland.

Not satisfied with offering these injuries to his nephew, the cardinal perceiving that the duke, during his absence, had gained a sufficient influence in council to counteract his schemes, introduced, through his intrigues, a new set of members into the assembly. Roused at length by such repeated instances of malice, the protector determined to obtain some revenge on the implacable Baufort for these galling affronts offered his person. An opportunity
was

was not long in presenting itself; and, through means of his newly acquired dignity, he contrived completely to humble his proud foe.

St. George's day, patron of the most honourable order of the garter, being at hand, the cardinal was to officiate as bishop of Winchester; when Gloucester and his friends, according to agreement, firmly opposed it; affirming that his lordship could not hold the bishopric of Winchester with a cardinalship without the king's express licence. This affair being brought by the friends of the cardinal before council, and they, however biassed in his favour, not finding any precedent, it was resolved that his lordship, for this time, should not act as bishop of Winchester; and two lords were sent to give him notice of it.

Flaming with rage at this refusal, the following day he presented himself at the board, and demanded upon what grounds
they

they deprived him of his right? when Gloucester with the utmost coolness informed him, that it was from an apprehension of prejudicing the prerogative of the crown that they had been induced to decline his assistance. Rendered, if possible, more furious than before at this answer, he again appealed to the council; but, to his extreme mortification, they persisted in the resolution of the day before, and he was obliged to submit to their determination.

In the mean time the regent having signified to the duke of Burgundy Jaquelina's consent to a reference being made to the Pope, that prince, overjoyed beyond measure at this unhoped-for submission, instantly agreed to apologize to the protector for any improper word which, in the heat of their dispute, passion might have prompted him to utter, and to suspend all farther hostilities, whatever might be his Holiness's decision. Satisfied with this answer,

swer, Bedford quitted the duke in order to inform the princess of his success; when Burgundy, fearful lest she should change her resolution, without losing a moment's time, announced to Brabant by a letter Jaquelina's unlooked-for acquiescence.

Immediately the exulting Brabant made his appeal to the court of Rome, and anticipates with gloomy satisfaction the revenge that will be his when the sentence shall be made known.

During this interval of suspense, no torments imaginable could equal those which infested the bosom of our heroine. From the moment she had agreed to abide by the decision of the Pope, sleep had forsaken her eyes, and peace had fled from her breast. All society but that of her faithful Sophia, with whom, unrestrained, she could give a loose to her sorrows, was irksome to her. Her imagination was continually haunted by a picture of the agonies that would be Gloucester's, should the Pope
doom

doom their separation. She beheld him a prey to the bitterest grief; and, in his despair, loudly exclaiming against that tenderness which had cost them their mutual happiness. Then, endeavouring to check such gloomy presages, she strove to persuade herself that the decision would be favourable to their love. But a sad presentiment instantly banished the momentary suspension that this idea gave to her sorrow, and plunged her again into all those horrors which before assailed her heart. A few days, however, were only permitted her to be in this incertitude; and the regent, not without the sincerest pity, delivered to her a sentence which dissolved her marriage with Gloucester, and confirmed her former contract with the duke of Brabant.

Bedford, not knowing to what extremities this unexpected event might drive his brother, determined, however painful the task, to be himself the bearer of intelligence.

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ligence so fatal to his repose. Immediately quitting France, therefore, in a few days after he arrived in England, and before the protector could be apprised of his arrival he was in his arms. Gloucester, entirely unprepared for this visit, could scarcely believe it was his brother; but quickly his surprise was changed into concern on beholding the solemn sadness which overspread the countenance of Bedford, whose breast was labouring with the painful secret he was about to disclose.

Not knowing in what terms to break tidings that he was conscious would fall so heavily, Bedford had for some moments beheld, in pitying silence, his unconsciously wretched brother, when the duke, alarmed at his manner, demanded if he was ill. "Not ill, my brother;" returned Bedford, "but grieved." "Alas! for what cause?" anxiously enquired Gloucester.—"For thee, my brother."—"For me, my lord!" exclaimed the duke with an astonished air.

"Yes,

“Yes, Gloucester, on your account this heart now bleeds !” then taking his hand — “and to prepare you for a painful yet unavoidable event is the purpose for which I visit England.” — Gloucester trembled and changed colour. — “Is it of my Jaquelina you would tell me ?” cried he hastily — “You have, indeed, rightly conjectured.” — “Oh God ! you come to inform me she is no more !” He clasped his hands in impatient agony. — “No : the princess lives, but not for Gloucester !” — The duke started — “What means your highness ?” — “That she has shewn herself superior to her sex ?” — “You trifle with my anxiety, brother : Oh, in pity relieve this cruel incertitude, and tell me of my Jaquelina.”

“Alas ! it pains me to repeat what will afflict my Gloucester.” — “Almighty God ! can any misery surpass the agony of this suspense ? — Fear not my resolution — my fortitude.”

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cried Bedford, regarding him with a compassionating aspect—"can you then bear, as should become you, an eternal separation from her you love?"—Consternation was visible on the countenance of Gloucester: "You need not proceed, my lord," cried he with much emotion; "my heart anticipates the rest—You would tell me that our forces in Holland are destroyed, and that my Jaquelina is a wretched prisoner—Oh may everlasting curses light upon the meddling, ambitious Burgundy, who has heaped such miseries on our heads! But talk not to me of separation. Think you I will desert her? leave the lovely unhappy captive to sigh away her soul in sad imprisonment?—No: whilst this life is lent me, it shall be devoted to her service."

"You are too hasty in your conjectures—No fresh disaster has happened to your forces—The princess is safe, and enjoys her liberty—Yet I repeat, she is lost to you; a power superior to that of arms for ever separates

separates you.”—“Great God!” exclaimed the duke struck with horror, “what dreadful mystery lurks beneath your words? Yet wherefore do I fear? What earthly power can separate us, since she has consented to be mine?”—“But if she retracts that consent; if, moved by compassion for the miseries this ill-fated union had brought on thousands, she has agreed to abide by the decision of the pope——”

“Impossible!” interrupted the duke with angry vehemence: “in injuring thus my Jaquelina, Bedford presumes too much upon my love.”—“What if I have proofs of her consent to abide by his holiness’s decision?”—The eyes of Gloucester sparkled with resentment: “Away, my lord!” cried he, turning disdainfully from his brother: “this base aspersions of an innocent princess is beneath the son of Henry—I had better hopes from Bedford than this mean jealousy.”

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his love at a charge so injurious : yet the latter triumphed, and, regarding his brother with deep compassion—"Unkind Gloucester!" cried he, "how have I merited these suspicions? But I forgive and pity thee."—"Reserve your forgiveness, my lord," returned Gloucester reproachfully, "for the man who would plant daggers in the bosom of that friend who loved him. Forgive, if thou canst, thyself—and for thy pity, know, that he who possesses the love of Jaquelina can never merit such a sensation. Leave me, my lord, or perhaps I may forget that we are brothers."—"By heavens I will not!" said Bedford warmly : "spite of my wrongs I will not leave thee till thou art convinced how much thou hast injured me. See there, unhappy man—" continued he, drawing from his pocket the written agreement of the princess—"See there the witness of my truth!"—With eagerness Gloucester caught at the fatal paper; when what was the confusion, the despair,

despair, that seized his soul, at perceiving a sentence which for ever blasted his happiness, signed by Jaquelina !

Struck to the heart, he now gazed insensible on the contents. A death-like paleness succeeded the burning crimson which before had flushed his cheek. His hands were clenched in agony. He staggered, and, had not Bedford flown to his assistance, would have fallen to the ground. The duke supported him almost motionless in his arms, and for some time grief had so entirely deadened every sense as to render him unconscious of his misery. At length a deep sigh indicated returning life.—“How fares my brother?” cried Bedford, pressing him affectionately to his bosom, and losing in his pity all remembrance of his wrongs. Gloucester looked up—Penitence and grief were deeply written on his countenance. He essayed to speak—He would have implored pardon and forgiveness of his brother ; but anguish choked his

his voice, and, hiding his face in his bosom, he burst into tears.

A paroxysm of rage succeeded this flow of tender grief. Bitterly he execrated that blind confidence which had made him treat with base ingratitude the best of brothers; loudly accusing the hapless Jaquelina of having leagued with his enemies against his peace.

Conscious of her innocence—conscious that only motives the most tender and honourable had influenced her—how was the noble heart of Bedford grieved at hearing her thus aspersed! Scarcely could he refrain himself from acknowledging the cause which had induced the princess to abide by the pope's decision; and had he not been restrained by the solemn promise he had given her, he would, though at the expence of prudence, have made an avowal, which at once would have cleared her from suspicions so injurious.

In spite of the high indignation which

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H

Gloucester

Gloucester had conceived against the princess, Bedford easily saw, that, when become more calm, his love would endeavour to excuse that acquiescence which he now so fiercely resented ; that he would still pursue his claims ; or that, probably, discovering the real motives which had actuated her, the very consequences might ensue, which she had given herself the sacrifice to avoid.

Dreading the evils such continued quarrels would bring upon his country, an idea presented itself to the mind of the duke, of stimulating his brother to take that revenge on Jaquelina's supposed perfidy, which would place an effectual bar to his pursuing any future schemes to regain her. This plan was no sooner suggested than adopted by Bedford ; and lady Eleanor appeared to him to be the most proper object for carrying it into execution. Her injured honour, he felt, required this reparation—and her transcendent charms, he hoped, would

would obliterate the remembrance of Jaqueline.

This unhappy lady, on the protector's marriage, covered with shame and grief, had quitted the court, and had sought to bury her sorrows in the retirement of Sterborough. There, unnoticed by an unpitying world, she gave a loose to her grief—there unheard she lamented that fond credulity which had undone her. Agreeably to his hopes, Bedford found that Gloucester caught with avidity the idea of revenge. His eyes again resumed their wonted fire—his bosom glowed at the exulting thought—and not till his brother had let fall the name of Eleanor was he interrupted.—At her name he started, and turned indignantly away. But Bedford, not discouraged, so earnestly pleaded her cause, that Gloucester, in his resentment at the idea of espousing her, dropped some expressions not highly tending to the honour of the fair Eleanor.

H 2

Bedford,

Bedford, highly displeased at this disrespectful mention of a lady, who, excepting in one instance, had never given the smallest room for censure, took his brother severely to task, and, to his confusion, still continued his entreaties. At length Gloucester grew offended—"What, my lord!" cried he angrily, "do you advise your brother to wed a woman who has been so far forgetful of herself as to forfeit her honour?—Ah, what security should I have for mine, should I thus imprudently intrust it to her keeping?" "Forbear, my lord," exclaimed Bedford warmly, "these injurious doubts: they are unworthy of you, and undeserved by Eleanor. That very love which has rendered her unmindful of what she owed her birth and dignity, will prove your safeguard.

"Can you remember who was the author of her fall, and yet reproach her loss of innocence? You found her beautiful as day, the rich heiress of an illustrious

ous house; the pride, the ornament of the British court; her air the model for imitation; her taste the standard of elegance and fashion; followed, courted, flattered, and admired; even malice could accuse her but of pride, and that fell before Gloucester. You became enamoured of her charms, and the admiring crowd were quickly banished. How often have you languished at her feet, and been transported, until heaven as well as she listened to your vows! Loving you to excess, she fondly trusted to your honour, and you triumphed o'er her virtue—when, *cruel!* you abandoned, left her forlorn, to sigh in secret her lost innocence, but more the loss of Gloucester.”

The duke could not withstand this affecting picture: his reluctance, his prejudices gave way to his justice; and still determined on revenge, he gave a solemn promise to Bedford, that he would espouse the deeply injured Ellen.

CHAP. IX.

FROM the moment the marriage of Jaquelina and Gloucester had been dissolved, the regent had taken that princess under his immediate protection, and, according to his promise, secured her a retreat, where she was safe from the persecutions of Brabant.

The agonies she had endured at a sentence which for ever severed her from the beloved of her soul, were doubled, as she reflected on the cause she had given Gloucester for suspecting an estrangement of her affections. No effort of reason, no self-conviction of the exalted motives from which she had acted, could mitigate the pain this thought excited. A slow corroding grief imperceptibly began to undermine her constitution. Daily she grew weaker, till at length her anxious friends became alarmed. The princess beheld
with

with composure these symptoms of approaching mortality, and vainly tried to abate the poignant grief which the idea of her dissolution gave Sophia. A world which had scarcely afforded her any thing but sorrow, which, now that she was separated from Gloucester, appeared a blank, could not be regretted by Jaquelina; and the idea alone of quitting it without being restored to his good opinion, gave her an anxious moment. A few weeks only had elapsed since the dissolution of her marriage, when an event happened which once more held out to her a prospect of peace and happiness—This was the death of Brabant.

There is a something so strikingly awful in death, that even the wretch who is relieved by such an event from long and sad captivity, must feel a check upon that joy which the approach of freedom gives, when he reflects upon the solemn cause by which it is attained. Such were the feelings which our heroine experienced; and in the

first moments of the surprise and shock occasioned by this unexpected event, the many just reasons she had to be thankful were forgotten entirely. Yet it must be confessed, that soon all gloomy impressions vanished, when the idea occurred, that there now no longer remained any obstacle which could impede her union with Gloucester.

Kreutzer no sooner heard of the death of Brabant, than, without waiting for the princess's permission, he hastened to England with tidings, which he doubted not would be joyfully received by the protector; whilst Jaquelina, learning from Sophia the motives of his absence, could scarcely conceal her vexation. To appear to solicit for that love which she felt was her due, gave a wound the most painful to her vanity; yet, unwilling to grieve the gentle heart of her friend by acknowledging the concern this too ready zeal gave her, she suppressed her feelings, and strove to appear satisfied.

Nearly

Nearly ten days had passed since the departure of Frederick ; during which time Jaquelina had yielded herself, without reserve, to the delightful prospect that presented itself to her view. She beheld herself restored to Gloucester, and in the possession of those rights which would fully satisfy his highest ambition. Her health, renovated by the charms of hope, no longer afforded subject of uneasiness for her friends. Her eyes sparkled with expectation—and peace, so long a stranger, again visited her bosom. Not doubting but that the same vessel which returned with Kreutzer would bring the duke, how tumultuously beat her heart, when she was informed it was within sight ! How long, how tedious did the moments pass, till she could learn if he was on board !

At length it arrived ; when, after having endured, for nearly an hour, a degree of impatience bordering upon agony, Frederick presented himself before her. At not seeing Gloucester, Jaquelina trembles—she

turns sick with apprehension, and leans against Sophia for support. With a tremulous voice she enquires for her lord. The evasive answers Kreutzer gives, increase her terror—She fancies she reads in his countenance some afflicting tidings, and her fears become scarcely supportable.—Gazing upon him with supplicating and imploring look, she conjures him in pity to relieve her doubts. Frederick hesitated—he essays to pacify her; but his voice trembled, and he was obliged to turn aside, that he might conceal from her his emotion.

No longer able to endure this suspense, in an agony she now caught him by the arm—“Tell me—tell me,” cried she with a wild distracted air, “tell me of my lord!—my husband!—my Gloucester! Oh God! perhaps he thinks not of his Jacqueline; or, yet incensed against her, casts her from his inexorable heart. Speak! tell me the worst.”

Kreutzer, though trembling for the event,
could

could no longer withstand her entreaties. His heart bled for her distress; and, turning towards her, with an air of the tenderest pity: "Alas! madam, how it grieves me to be the messenger of news that will so afflict your heart!—But I cannot longer conceal from you, that the duke is——" He paused. "Say!" cried Jaquelina, trembling with agony, "say, what of the duke?" "That he is married."—"Married! Gloucester married! Almighty God! To whom?"—"To the lady Eleanor Cobham!"

The unhappy princess had heard enough. Petrified, and horror-struck, she fell senseless into the arms of her friend. This seemed the finish to her misfortunes—Against *this* she found it impossible to bear up.

Many hours elapsed before Sophia could restore her to recollection; and when it did return, what misery did it not bring! Yet she vented not her grief in loud complaints

—not a tear escaped her—a deep yet silent sorrow had pervaded her heart—and when Kreutzer, at her desire, was admitted to her presence, he found her, though pale and trembling, apparently resigned to the severities of her fate.

“I sent for you, my friend,” cried the princess composedly, “that I might learn the particulars of that event, which on your first arrival I wanted fortitude to bear. Indeed I have been very, very weak,” continued she, faintly smiling, “but now I think,” and she put her hand to her heart, “—now I hope you will find I want not firmness.”

“Ah, madam, I entreat you,” cried Frederick much affected, “postpone till a future day the relation of circumstances that will so much afflict you.”—“Oblige me, my friend,” interrupted the princess with impatience, “by sparing these dissuaves: methinks I cannot now bear opposition. What can you tell worse than what I know?

I know? and yet you see how calm I am amidst misfortunes that defy the power of fortune to augment. Fear not, then, to relate to me every circumstance, however wounding. Fain would I know if it was to resentment I owe the loss of Gloucester."

"Since it is your highness's command," returned Frederick, "however reluctant I feel myself, I must obey. I had no sooner found myself in England," said he, "than with all imaginable haste I proceeded towards the capital. Arrived there, many minutes did not elapse before I was at the protector's gates, which, to my surprise, I observed were crowded on each side by a numerous multitude of both sexes. I immediately demanded of the porters admittance to the duke; when, with a significant smile, they told me, that his highness was absent, but that, though they presently expected him, they fancied, unless my business were very urgent, at such a season
I should

I should find it difficult to procure an audience. Scarcely attending to what they said, I hastily passed them, and entered a court lined on every side with servants in splendid liveries, each with a bridal favour. An air of unusual festivity appeared on every countenance, and they seemed as if waiting the arrival of their lord. Surprised at this sight, I enquired the occasion of their being thus assembled, of one who happened to be standing next me. The man whom I had addressed, regarded me with wonder: 'Can you be ignorant,' cried he, 'that the lord protector this day weds the lady Eleanor Cobham?' Struck with consternation, and doubtful if I had heard right, I made him repeat his words: still he affirmed the same, yet I remained incredulous. It is impossible, cried I—it is impossible this can be true: being a stranger, you wish to deceive me. Never can I believe that the duke has so soon forgotten——" Here Frederick paused—He
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saw the princess change colour, and he felt grieved beyond measure he had gone so far.

“Proceed, my good friend,” cried the princess, checking her emotion; “bear with these weaknesses, and do not let them prevent your continuing what my heart is so much interested in.” Kreutzer bowed, in token of obedience, but it was a task that pained him to the very soul.

“As I was thus interrogating the man,” continued he, “the noise of carriages and trampling of horses was heard: immediately the gates were thrown open.—‘Now,’ cried my informer, exultingly turning towards me, ‘now you will be convinced of the truth of what I have been telling you.’ Scarcely had he spoken before a company of guards filled the court. These were followed by some running-footmen, who preceded a magnificent chariot, drawn by six milk-white steeds richly caparisoned, in which sat a young lady beauteous as day.”

The

The princess now turned very faint, and Frederick was obliged to make a pause. But soon finding herself a little recovered, she made a sign to him; which understanding as a signal to proceed, he went on with his relation.

“The carriage having reached the palace door, the duke alighted, and handed out his lovely bride, whose smiling looks sufficiently denoted the happiness of her heart.”

“And Gloucester,—did he look so happy? so *very* happy?” enquired Jaquelina with quickness.

“Ah no, madam,” returned Kreutzer: “so pale, so spiritless, so unlike what he was, did he appear, that I could scarcely believe it was Gloucester.” A faint blush of something like pleasure tinged the cheek of the princess.

“The rejoicings, the loud huzzas which now rent the air,” proceeded Frederick, “inspired me with a degree of indignation
beyond

beyond what I can describe ; when fully convinced of the fatal truth, and sick of the scene, I hastily quitted it, too much incensed against the duke even to leave my name. Panting for that revenge which I knew would be mine the moment I was afforded a private interview with the duke, how long did that day and night appear ! How did I count the moments, till that one arrived which gave me the opportunity I sighed for !

“ Arrived at the palace, I obtained, without difficulty, admittance to the duke. I found him in his study, with arms folded, leaning in a pensive posture, against the wall of the apartment. His eyes were turned towards the ground, and so absorbed was he in thought, that not till I had nearly approached him had he observed my entrance. Then, never shall I forget the expression of his countenance : alternately it changed from the deepest crimson to the deadliest white. At length recollecting himself,

self, he assumed a cold and serious air, and, stiffly bowing, demanded to what he owed the honour of my visit.

“I came, my lord, to announce to your highness tidings, which I had hoped would have yielded you the liveliest emotions of pleasure—but, alas! I find, to my bitter disappointment, I come too late. The duke looked disturbed:—‘What tidings can Kreutzer bring?’ enquired he, trying to assume an indifference, ‘that can import the duke of Gloucester?’”

“There was a time, my lord, cried I reproachfully, when the death of Brabant would not have been received without emotion by your highness. ‘The death of Brabant!’ exclaimed the duke, starting with surprise—‘And was it to tell me this you visited England?’ It was, my lord. The duke turned from me with a disordered air, and traversed, with hasty strides, the apartment. Several times I saw him passionately strike his clenched hand against his

his forehead, whilst sighs the most bitter burst from his heart. In spite of the anger I had conceived against him, I could not forbear feeling pity at his distress. Some minutes had elapsed without his seeming to remember I was in the room; when coming to his recollection, he grew ashamed of having so exposed himself; and, turning towards me with a countenance which expressed mingled anger and confusion—

‘And wherefore,’ cried he, ‘was Gloucester to be informed of this event? Was it that you might take advantage of my weakness, and triumph over my distress? to insult, to mock me, that the princess sent you? or, repenting the injuries she has heaped upon the fond believing Gloucester, does she send you to be her mediator with my just resentment? If so, tell that false, perfidious woman, her repentance comes too late—that Gloucester has revenged himself, and no more can be her dupe.’

Fury sparkled in his eyes—his whole visage
glowed

glowed with resentment. You have been deceived, my lord, greatly deceived. How differently does the princess merit from those lips ! It was to save you from the arm of Burgundy—to prove the means of your reconciliation with that vindictive prince, that she made her happiness the sacrifice, and submitted to a sentence which separated her from Gloucester. ‘ And was it for this,’ exclaimed the duke passionately, ‘ was it for this, she consented to the pope’s decision ?’ It was indeed, my lord. Ah, had you witnessed the agonies of her soul, when she forced herself to give consent, you would not thus upbraid her, tax her want of love.—‘ And have I then madly cast away the happiness which was within my reach ?—Has heaven removed this cruel bar to our loves, only to make us more wretched ?’—You have, indeed, my lord, been hasty ; too soon was forgotten that invaluable treasure once in your possession.

“ The duke regarded me with a look of
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phrenfied wildnefs.—‘Forgotten, faidft thou!—Jaquelina forgotten by Gloucefter! Ah never!—Not for one moment has her image, faithlefs as I fupposed her, been abfent from this heart. It was at the inftance of my brother, and to gratify my revenge, that I was induced to be another’s. Oh fatal miftaken tendernefs! Alas! alas! how has it undone us both!’

“The agonies that now poffeffed the duke,” continued Frederick, “were fuch as I could no longer bear to witnefs, and I withdrew, filled with pity and commiferation.”

“Poor Gloucefter!” fighed Jaquelina, lina, as Kreutzer concluded his narration; “too late doft thou repent thy precipitancy—And now all is over!” cried ſhe, clafping her hands, with an expreffion of deſpair—“Now quite are fled thoſe gay, thoſe enchanting viſions, which hope had painted to my fancy!—This completes the meafure of my woes!—Filled now is my cup of miſery!”

The

The constitution of Jaquélina sunk under this cruel blow, and a fever of the most fatal kind proved the consequence. Her beauteous cheek grew wan; her bright eyes lost all their former lustre; the roses vanished from her lips; her delicate but now feeble limbs could scarcely support their lovely burden; and the prospect of approaching death alone seemed to relieve the deep dejection of her mind. Her heart acquitting her of guilt, and regarding the awful moment of her dissolution as a termination of her sorrows, she not only approached the goal of life with firmness, but with rapture.

It was in vain her sorrowing friends tried to reconcile her to life, by painting to her the charms of that sovereignty and power which now awaited her acceptance. Her sickened heart shrunk disgusted from such images. The perfidy of her subjects had alienated from them her affections, and dominion over such, without Gloucester, appeared an irksome task.

The

The high-sounding titles, the empty pomp, and all the fopperies and tinsel glare of royalty, the soul of Jaquelina had ever been superior to—and now they excited in her no other sensations but those of contempt. To Philip she willingly resigned such fallacious advantages, and signed without one sigh, a paper which gave to him entire dominion over all those vast possessions bequeathed her by her father. Without any other sensations than those of pity for the people who were to be governed by such princes, she learnt that her bitter enemies the count and countess of St. Pol now enjoyed the sovereignty of Brabant.—With her, all resentments, all unquiet emotions now had ceased; and, filled with the rapturous ideas of an eternal peace, her bosom alone was the repository of sensations the most harmonious.

About a fortnight had elapsed since Jaquelina had become acquainted with an
event

event so destructive to her earthly happiness; during which time she daily grew worse, and at length began to feel some symptoms, which warned her that her last hour was nearly approaching. Immediately upon perceiving this change, she sent for Sophia.—“ I feel, my dear friend,” cried the princess, tenderly taking her hand; “ that a few hours will terminate an existence, which my misfortunes have rendered hateful to me—Nay, be not thus affected :”—seeing Sophia tremble and turn pale, “ a short struggle, and I shall be at peace.”

“ Oh my beloved, my adored mistress,” cried Sophia, falling at her feet, and bathing her hand with her tears,—“ and will you—can you find the heart thus cruelly to leave us ?”—“ Where is your reason, my dear Sophia ?” cried the princess, raising and embracing her :—“ is it given me to controul the will of Fate ?—Is it afforded me the choice to live or die ?”—“ Ah, if it were,

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were, well I know so fixed is your highness on leaving your sorrowing friends, that no pity for them would make you consent to live.”—“Unkind Sophia! would you then wish to see your friend drag on, for years, a wretched, miserable existence? Is this the love you bear to her?”—Sophia’s tears redoubled—“Ah, in pity, madam, spare so bitter a reproach—Would that you saw my heart! you would find that it bleeds for your distress.”—“I do believe it, my amiable friend!” returned the princess, “and entreat your pardon of my captiousness. It is the idea of living that excites this impatience. Let the reflection, that I am exchanging a land of trouble for that of peace, comfort you for my loss, and restrain those tears which so distress me.”—But this reflection was not sufficient to reconcile Sophia to the prospect of an eternal separation from so beloved a mistress; and she was obliged to withdraw, that she might conceal the agony of her soul.

Willing to take a last farewell of those generous few who had so nobly espoused her cause, she ordered her attendants to place her on a couch, and, wrapping about her faded form a loose muslin robe, she commanded them to her presence. To each, separately, she returned thanks for the fidelity and love they had evinced for her person, and for the courage with which they had supported her cause. To each she presented some little token of her regard, and besought them to shew the same attachment to her cousin Philip which they had manifested for her. The tears, the deep lamentations with which she was heard, affected her heart—Scarcely could she support herself from sinking under a scene so trying to her feelings. Her varying colour alarmed the afflicted company; and having kissed for the last time, and bathed with tears, the hand of their adored mistress, they withdrew, equally from regard to her, and to give relief to their overcharged hearts.

As

As the princess, reclined in the arms of Sophia, was endeavouring, by a short repose, to calm her agitated spirits, that she might meet, with becoming composure, that awful moment which now drew near, she was alarmed by a bustle of carriages and horses which sounded from the court-yard, and soon a confused murmuring of voices issued from the stairs. Sophia trembled violently.—“ Oh God !” exclaimed the princess breathless with terror, “ can it be Gloucester ?—But—no—impossible !—He would not dare intrude thus on me.”—“ Oh dearest lady,” cried Sophia, alarmed at her emotion, and flinging herself at her feet, “ can you forgive that rash zeal which prompted me to inform the duke of your danger ? Ah ! it is surely he.”—“ Imprudent friend !” returned Jaquelina sinking half fainting on her bosom, “ Why, why hast thou done this ? How couldst thou expose me to a sight so destructive to that serenity with which I had hoped to have

met death? But if thou yet lovest thy friend, go to that unhappy man—entreat of him to give up the thoughts of seeing more this hapless form—Oh tell him from me, how unequal I feel to such a meeting!” Scarcely had she spoken, and as Sophia was preparing to obey her, the door flew open—and with a countenance pale and disordered, his hair dishevelled, and his whole appearance indicating evident marks of a distracted mind, appeared the duke of Gloucester.

At seeing the ravages which grief and sickness had made on a form so loved—at viewing already the hand of death preparing to snatch from the world the loveliest flower which Nature, though in her most smiling moods, had ever formed—he remained petrified with grief, for a moment; then starting from this momentary stupor, with impetuous eagerness he sprung forward, and clasped her almost expiring frame to his distracted bosom.

A mortal

A mortal paleness now succeeded the hectic blush which had coloured the wan cheek of Jaquelina, and, casting on him a look expressive of reproach, she remained motionless in his arms :—" See, my lord !" cried Sophia wild with terror,—" see, you have killed the princess !" The duke pressed her in speechless agony to his heart ; then raising his eyes filled with anguish towards heaven, he seemed to accuse it of cruelty. In a few minutes the princess recovered ; when, finding herself in the arms of Gloucester, she made a feeble attempt to disengage herself—Perceiving her uneasiness, the duke quitted his hold, and, throwing himself at her feet, he covered his face with her robe and burst into tears.

Jaquelina gazed on him with strong emotion :—" Was it well done, my lord," cried she deeply sighing, " to break thus on my privacy ;—and disturb, by your presence, the serenity of those moments which alone should be dedicated to God ?"

—“ Oh do not reproach me, Jaqueline! Think of my sufferings, and spare them in pity !”—Then regarding her with a look of unutterable tenderness, “ And wilt thou—must thou die ? most beloved of thy sex !” continued he—“ Oh speak comfort to this afflicted heart, and tell me thou art better !”—“ I will not deceive thee, Gloucester !” returned the princess faintly : “ a few short moments, and this departing spirit will take an eternal flight !”—“ And canst thou forgive me, Jaqueline, all thy wrongs ?—Believest thou it was revenge that prompted me to wed Eleanor ?”—“ I will not believe otherwise than thou wouldst have me !” said the princess, whilst a faint blush slightly tinged her cheek. “ Methinks I wish not to believe that Gloucester had ever ceased to love Jaqueline.”—“ Angelic goodness !—Matchless—matchless tenderness ! How can I bear to part with thee ? How endure existence when thou art gone ?—But let me not talk of death !” continued he,

he, seizing with phrensed wildness her hand—Deign but to live, my Jaquelina, and we will yet be happy!—Live, and we will fly to some distant country where no tyrant laws shall rob us of our happiness! Ah, though it were some desert, bleak and comfortless, exposed to all the inclemencies of season, yet, possessed of thee, it would appear a paradise to Gloucester.”—The princess sighed, and turned indignantly away—“Camest thou then, Gloucester,” cried she resentfully, “to insult me?”—“To insult thee, Jaquelina!”—“Yes! Thinkest thou so poorly of this heart as to imagine that it would tamely listen to so infamous a proposal?—This is indeed bitter to me!” She wept.—“Oh forgive; pardon, most beloved, most adored of women!” exclaimed the duke agonized by her distress, “what alone my misery prompted. Canst thou imagine I ever could think poorly of a soul like thine?—Oh let me hear thy lips pronounce, once more, forgiveness, or I shall go distracted!”

The

The feeble frame of the princess, exhausted, torn by such conflicts, appeared now about to yield to their force. Her respiration was short and hurried—a trembling seized her—a thick mist gathered before her eyes, and her lips alone moved to grant the forgiveness Gloucester supplicated.

“Oh God!” exclaimed the duke frantically, “she is expiring!—It is my fatal imprudence that has killed——But it is here,” continued he, wildly catching her to his breast, “it is here alone she shall meet the tyrant!”—“Oh be calm, my lord! In pity,” cried Sophia, “cease! Restrain these transports! Disturb not, by these transports, her last moments!”—“She shall not die! By heavens she shall not!” said Gloucester wildly.—But see!—behold you not?—she breathes!—It is these arms that restore her to life. Oh joy unutterable! She lives, and will forgive her Gloucester!—Speak to me, Jaqueline—Tell me I am forgiven!”

The

The princess looked up, and, regarding with pity the distraction of the duke, "O! thou," cried she, "for whom this heart still beats with tenderness, for whose happiness it yet is anxious, afflict not my departing soul by this deep, this unavailing grief! Wherefore this unwillingness to part with one who is so desirous of death? who, not even for thee, would forego those blissful prospects that now present themselves! Think, reflect, how few have been the moments permitted us to know peace! Heaven seemed to forbid our loves—and, from our precipitate indulgence of it, has thus contrived our punishment. Then cease to repine, and rejoice me by an assurance that thou wilt not suffer grief to gain the mastery over thy reason; and let not thy Eleanor have the wretchedness to find that the affections of Gloucester are buried in the tomb of Jaqueline.—Now give me thy supporting arm, my Sophia!—friend of my heart!—A short struggle, and all will be over!"

Gloucester

Gloucester with jealous haste bent forward to relieve the expiring princess.—Growing faint, she desired her confessor might be called, when, the usual ceremonies having passed, she gently reclined her head on the shoulder of the duke, and calmly awaited the moment of her dissolution.—A solemn pause ensued. It was at this awful moment when the soul of Jaqueline was hovering on eternity—when every moment her despairing friends expected to see it loose itself from the slight frame which detained it, and wing its eternal flight—and when the mind of the princess was solely absorbed in heavenly contemplations, that an alarming bustle was heard on the stairs which immediately led to her apartment. Soon it drew nearer, and voices sounded as in loud contention. The princess started—“ Oh God !” exclaimed she, shrieking, “ it is the voice of my mother !”—Every eye now was turned towards the door ; which being violently forced, in rushed the duchess of Bavaria : “ Where, where,”

where," cried she, wildly pushing forwards, " where is my child—my murdered Jaquelina ?"—" Oh save me !" entreated the princess, throwing herself into the arms of Sophia—" Save me from this inhuman parent, or I expire this instant !"—" And is it at a moment like this, unhappy princess," exclaimed a hollow voice, which Jaquelina, shuddering, recognized to be that of father John—" Is it at a moment so tremendous that thou retainest resentment, and withholdest forgiveness from a wretched penitent ?—that penitent a mother too !—In a frame like this, darest thou encounter the presence of thy Creator, and expect to obtain that pardon and remission from him which thou deniest to others ?"—Flames of fire darted from the eyes of Gloucester : " Presumeth a being such as *thou*," cried he with a furious voice, " to admonish an expiring angel ?——Thinketh thy narrow soul, that other sentiments are excited in that pure form but those

those of terror?—Is then all pity vanished from thy inexorable bosom, that at such a season thou intrudest a presence which thou justly mightest have conceived was hateful?”

“And does my child, my Jaquelina, refuse me then forgiveness?” exclaimed the duchess clasping her hands in an agony of grief—“Can that heart, once so gentle, be steeled against the wretched being who gave her birth?—See, Jaquelina! behold at your feet your miserable parent! and if this sight will not move thee, regard that unhappy old man! You have seen him harsh and implacable—Now behold him! See on his furrowed cheek the bitter tear of penitence!—Come, father, and join me in supplicating pardon for our mutual crimes.”—“Spare, spare a sight so shocking to my nature!” cried the princess sinking on the bosom of the duchess: “Ah, what can a mother ask, and Jaquelina refuse?”—
“And dost thou afford us thy forgiveness,
my

my much injured child ?"—“ Freely, freely—as I hope myself for mercy !”

“ And art thou indeed so ill—so *very* ill, my Jaquelina ? Can no remedies relieve thy sickness ? Is there no hope ?——But wherefore do I ask, when I behold (heart-killing sight !) thy pallid cheek, thy closing eye, and fleshless form ?—Oh wretched, wretched mother—Why, why will not Heaven listen to my prayer, and preserve that beloved life at the expence of mine ?—But, as a curse it is left me. Yes, Jaquelina, the ingratitude of Blanche punishes my cruelty to thee. Blind, blind infatuated wretch, that could lend an attentive ear to the murderous slanders of a fiend, and refuse to listen to the voice of nature, which pleaded in this bosom for a child so dutious !—Now, now am I punished !—How do those eyes, once filled with lustre, but now so dim, speak daggers to this accusing spirit !—Yes ! thus beholding thee, Heaven has avenged thy wrongs !”

The princess gazed with pity on her wretched parent, and raising her eyes with a supplicating look towards heaven—"Oh Father of mercies!" cried she, "be it thy care to heal the sorrows of this unhappy princess!—Visit with thy restoring peace her deeply-wounded mind!—Erase from her heart all remembrances that may make the memory of Jaquelina painful to her!—and let her image, as it presents itself, appear the messenger of peace!"

Overcome with this exertion, she sunk back—Her eye glanced towards Gloucester—and—whilst a smile the most peaceful overspread her countenance—she expired!

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